

SLINGSHOT

EXISTENTIAL COMPOST

STAYING INSPIRED IN SPITE OF PAIN



By Finn

A few years ago, I was helping a friend with an understaffed bike cooperative that provided composting services in a city that lacked a municipal green waste system. The co-op, which was based out of an anarchist community center, was run by a small handful of self-identified radicals. While showing me my bike route, one of the co-op's founding members explained to me why he was quitting. He had very strong feelings about insurrectionary anarchism and had decided that more structural projects — such as worker-owned cooperatives — were pointless if we weren't actively engaged in armed revolution. His views had become so strong in this respect that he had decided to "wash his hands" not only of activism, but of composting, bicycling, and the other "trappings of radical lifestyles".

More recently, *Slingshot* received a letter from a person who was struggling with feelings of self-hatred and inadequacy around being an anarchist. The writer was grappling with what it meant to engage in radical politics — if it was arrogant to fight for something so massive and

complex as a stateless society, and if there was a way to let go of worrying whether The Revolution was ever going to happen. Notably, they were wondering if it was possible to detach oneself from the concept of a "final goal" in radical activism without losing passion.

...these are examples of folks who got so caught up in anger, hopelessness, and a desire for immediate large-scale change that they began to question the value of their efforts.

These two anecdotes speak to a type of burnout that has less to do with overcommitment and more to do with existential pain. Unlike others I know who have taken extended breaks from activism because they exhausted themselves with over extension, these are examples of folks who got so caught up in anger, hopelessness, and a desire for immediate large-scale change that they began to question the value of their efforts.

I hit the existential wall 10 years ago, when I was cutting my teeth at an anti-Monsanto protest. Temperatures were nearing triple digits, a cop who'd dropped to the ground after beating a preteen with a billy club lay dying from a heart attack, several of my friends were bleeding and being dragged off to the Philadelphia Roundhouse, and the living cops were beating folks at random with (maybe this is ironic?) bicycles. While debriefing with what

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RISE UP,
SPEAK OUT,
FIGHT BACK

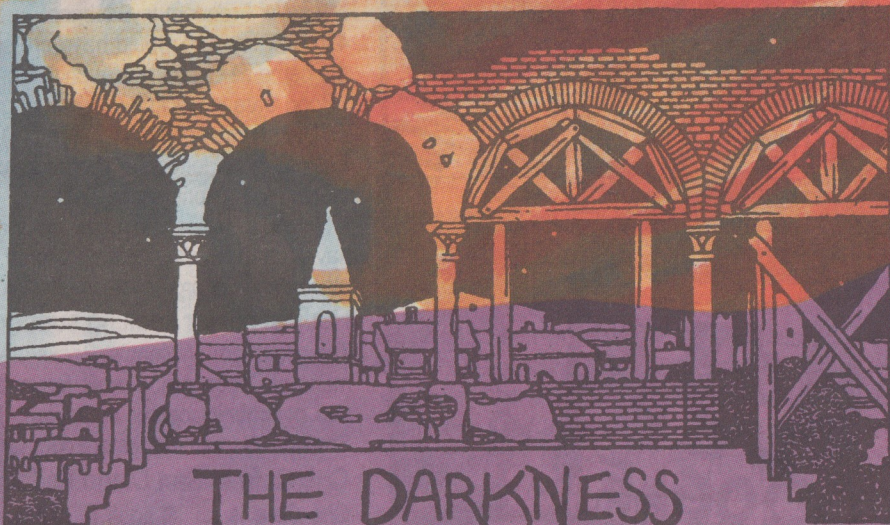
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THE DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN RESIST INERTIA, EMBRACE COLLAPSE

By Jesse D. Palmer

We're living in a frustrating time of political and cultural stagnation — both in terms of the collapsing corporate monster and our (currently feeble) resistance to it. The horrors of the

collapses, this will bring a period of famine, epidemic, destruction and suffering — and too many of us willingly buy into this narrative. Doomthink is fashionable, accompanied by resignation and a reorientation to purely

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RISE UP, SPEAK OUT, FIGHT BACK STOP SEXUAL VIOLENCE

By Alexa

All but one of my closest friends is a survivor of sexual assault. My mother and my best friend, the two women on this earth who are most important to me, are survivors. Some of these people experienced these atrocities before I knew them, and others confided in me shortly after their escape. Their stories came out slowly and sometimes shamefully, through a fog of confusion about what too many people will never mention. All of these people whom I hold closest to my heart have cried over a bodily invasion, a choice stolen, and a betrayal.

Subsequently, they have been forced to fight a culture which not only condones rape, but will not let them mourn. They have been exploited and abused by their perpetrators and by a society that invalidates and silences their experiences. FUCK THAT.

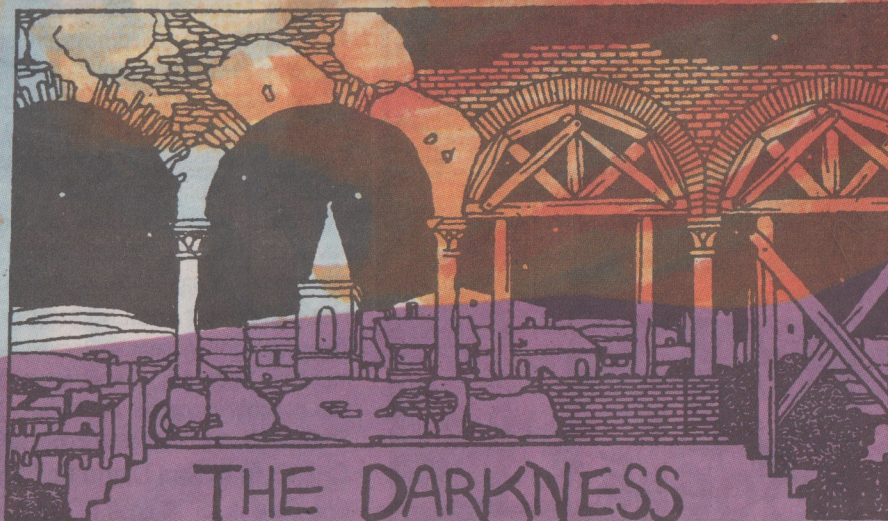
I have tipped past the point of sadness and into a realm of rage and indignation. No, this is

experienced — one which I know I do not bear alone. It is a rage towards the patriarchal culture which we all live in, a culture whose media and values accept rape. Once a pacifist, I no longer feel the staunch aversion to violent intervention. I would never raise a fist without a survivor's consent, but as my knowledge and growth builds, so does my vehement thirst for retaliation.

In writing this, I am not trying to convince anyone of the validity of my words, of the truth. Fuck that. Here is not the place to fight that uphill battle. Rather, I am clutching to my rage and passion to urge survivors and allies: RISE UP, SPEAK OUT & FIGHT BACK

Fight back:

We need to fight back against anyone under notion that another's body is their property. We are taught this myth that our partners are entitled to our bodies, and that sexual



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We're living in a frustrating time of political and cultural stagnation — both in terms of the collapsing corporate monster and our (currently feeble) resistance to it. The horrors of the system keep piling up and trying to drag us down: another open-ended US war in Iraq and Syria, gentrification, evictions and economic stratification licking at our heels, and what's left of the oceans and wilderness teetering on the brink of extinction while fracking and industrialization pour more CO2 into the air. . . .

Even more concerning is the relative calm and silence in the streets in the face of all of this. Where are the strikes, the riots, the active resistance and refusal? It doesn't have to be like this — with the system's internal contradictions so extreme, the veneer of resignation and apathy is unlikely to endure much longer.

We all sense the system is unsustainable — environmentally and economically. What that means is that the system as it is currently organized is on the verge of being swept away. The system wants everyone to think that if it

collapses, this will bring a period of famine, epidemic, destruction and suffering — and too many of us willingly buy into this narrative. Doomthink is fashionable, accompanied by resignation and a reorientation to purely personal concerns since "we can't do anything anyway. . . ." Naturally the system seeks to preserve itself by psychologically and culturally promoting fear of its own collapse in such a way that people feel powerless, resigned and isolated so they'll passively accept business as usual.

But *another way* to approach the system's unsustainability is to rejoice, because this means that our current hassles are near an end. Part of the unsustainability of the system *is us*. Our role — if we're willing to step up — can be to *rise up* against the system and its meaningless jobs, its production for profit not use, its ugly industrial machines, its police and endless wars, and its isolation, selfishness and loneliness.

Environmental collapse isn't the only option and the question now is whether we can shake

Continued on Page 14

STOP LEARN VIOLENCE

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★ SLINGSHOT ★

Slingshot is an independent radical newspaper published in Berkeley since 1988.

If it seems like an inordinate amount of time has passed between issues of *Slingshot*, your intuition is right. The structures that we've relied on to make the paper the last couple of decades broke down this time. Normally, we publish an article deadline and articles show up. We publish the date for a new volunteer meeting, and new and old members of the collective show up. This time at the deadline we mostly got poorly written articles. A bunch of people came to the new volunteer meeting but never came back, while longer-term members of the collective were absent. We had to extend the deadline twice and had small, sad meetings.

Little by little some momentum returned. Some articles came in that we really liked. Beautiful cover art appeared. We called each other and left late-night collective voicemails on speaker phone. We exchanged historic office supplies. We ate bananas. We sent birthday cards. Some of us even drank a little wine. In the end, we had so many good articles that we consulted a magick 8-ball to decide what to put on the first page.

So now we're finally pushing this late issue out into the world with a Question: How can we re-imagine and revive the *Slingshot* collective so the paper can continue more smoothly? This project -- 27 years old now -- has a lot going for it. Unlike most radical projects, we are blessed with sufficient funding, provided by the *Slingshot* organizer calendar. Because of the network we've built around the Organizer, we have an excellent community of distributors all over the country who hand out the papers we publish. We have a unique voice and style that offers opportunities for artistic, political and literary expression.

The weak spots are that we need more article submissions and more help with editing. In the age of the internet with instant gratification and computerized-publishing, more people are writers than ever before and there is a lot of good material out there. We urge you to send some of it our way. Paper distribution provides opportunities to reach out to people who wouldn't otherwise stumble onto radical ideas and this helps radicals break out of our self-created intellectual/cultural/social bubble.

Our other big problem is a 6-month backlog processing mail from prisoners. We are getting thousands of letters from prisoners and we're

FERTILE SOILS

Radical Spaces Spread Like Weeds

Compiled by Jesse D. Palmer

The radical contact list published in the 2015 *Slingshot* Organizer that came out October 1 is the best contact list we've published in years reflecting hundreds of phone calls and emails we made over the summer to update and expand the list. But the very day we took the organizer to the printing press, we started learning about other spaces we left out and folks contacted us with corrections. So here are some updates.

Opening and maintaining radical spaces is a crucial part of the struggle for a new world based on cooperation, pleasure and love, not power, profit and greed. These spaces are fertile ground where seeds of thought and action can grow. You can help plant and nurture the seeds by plugging into your local radical spaces or starting one. To connect even more people to radical alternatives, we're hoping folks who read this will help us add contacts in Russia, Africa, the Middle East and a handful of US states where we don't currently have contacts. For the most updated information check slingshot.tao.ca/contacts

The Base - Brooklyn, NY

A space "committed to the dissemination of revolutionary left and anarchist ideas and organizing" that hosts events, study groups, meetings, a number of groups and an anarchist library. 1302 Myrtle Ave Brooklyn, NY 11221 thebasebk.org

Mutiny Information Cafe - Denver, CO

A bookstore, record store and cafe that hosts shows and events. 2 S. Broadway, Denver, CO

Revolutionary Autonomous Communities - Los Angeles, CA

They meet every Sunday from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm at MacArthur Park in Downtown LA to distribute salvaged produce received from groceries and through mutual aid with farmers. Not a space but a solid long-running project. revolutionaryautonomouscommunities.blogspot.com

MoKaBe's Coffeehouse - St. Louis, MO

A private business that hosts radical meetings and events. 3606 Arsenal St. St. Louis, MO 63116 314-865-2009 [facebook.com/mokabes](https://www.facebook.com/mokabes)

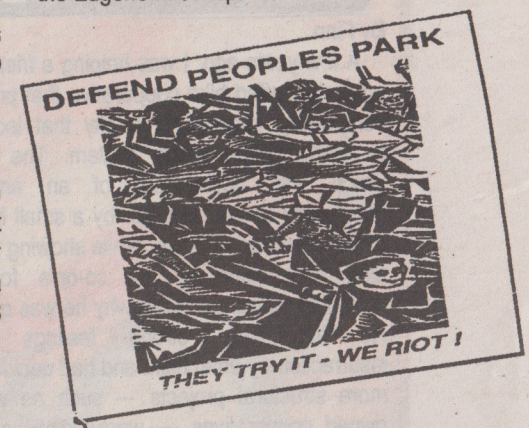
Mercury Cafe - Denver, CO

An organic restaurant that hosts artistic and cultural events. Not sure they are really a radical space but someone suggested we list them so perhaps some of our friends in Denver will give us feedback on this. 2199 California Street Denver, CO 80205 303-294-9258 mercurycafe.com

Inkstorm + SadRad = RADSTORM - Halifax, NS, Canada

Inkstorm is a collectively run screenprinting studio with free access hours and classes. SadRad is an all-ages collectively operated show venue and jam space. They share space at 6050 Almon Street, 2nd Floor, Halifax, NS (mail: PO Box 33129 Halifax, NS B3L 4T6) sadrad.h-a-z.org and robertsstreet.org

- The day we went to the printer, Solidarity Houston (Texas) told us they won't be at the address we listed for them in 2015 (2805 Wichita). They don't have a new address yet but they still exist. Check their website for a new location once they know it. solidarityhouston.org
- The listing for Bad Egg Books in Eugene, OR has the wrong name. Their correct name is the Eugene Infoshop.



- We left out the phone number for the Collective for Arts, Freedom and Ecology in Fresno, CA. It is 559 237-0922.
- The Denver Community Health Collective (Colorado) is only at the address we published once a month on the 4th Wednesday from 5-7 pm. They may eventually add hours. Check their website: denverhealthcollective.com
- We left off the phone number for The Feminist Library in London. It is 020 7261



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Our other big problem is a 6-month backlog processing mail from prisoners. We are getting thousands of letters from prisoners and we're overwhelmed. We need help typing addresses into our mailing list and responding to the letters. If *Slingshot* can't find volunteers to process the prison mail, the only fair alternative is to warn prisoners not to write us anymore, because we don't have the infrastructure to handle their letters.

In other news, because *Slingshot* is an open-collective that welcomes whoever shows up, we've been struggling with how to deal with the rare situations where we can't work with people who show up to our meetings. In one instance, a tall white man named Darin made comments at meetings that were so disruptive that we finally asked him to stop coming to meetings. We also understand that he acted inappropriately towards a number of women by refusing to respect their requests that he leave them alone. These situations are hard on all-volunteer collectives and we delayed dealing with this situation for a long time because it was uncomfortable. This delay and avoidance didn't make the problem go away – it just made it last longer and contributed to the feeling that our collective might be okay with his actions.

Slingshot is always looking for new writers, artists, editors, photographers, translators, distributors, etc. to make this paper. If you send something written, please be open to editing.

Editorial decisions are made by the *Slingshot* Collective but not all the articles reflect the opinions of all collectives members. We welcome debate and constructive criticism.

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A bookstore, record store and cafe that hosts shows and events. 2 S. Broadway, Denver, CO 80209 303-778-7579 mutinyinfo cafe.com

May Day Bar and Community Space - Brooklyn, NY

A community center "for social justice organizing, community empowerment and creative expression" with a bar, cafe, two events spaces, and a co-working space. 214 Starr Street in Brooklyn, N Y 11237 maydayspace.org

Denver Zine Library - Denver, CO

They've been open since 2003 and have 15,000 zines from all over the world. You can borrow the zines and they hold workshops. Open Sat/Sun 11-3. New location. 2400 Curtis St., Denver, CO 80205 denverzinelibrary.org

Antioch Alternative Library - Yellow Springs, OH

An alternative library at the college that is nevertheless open to the public. Sontag Fels Building 800 Livermore Street Yellow Springs, OH 45387

George Wiley Center - Pawtucket, RI

A community organizing non-profit. 32 East Ave. Pawtucket, RI 02860 401-338-1665 georgewileycenter.org

Mokabe's Concubine - St. Louis, MO
A private business that hosts radical meetings and events. 3606 Arsenal St. St. Louis, MO 63116 314-865-2009 facebook.com/mokabes

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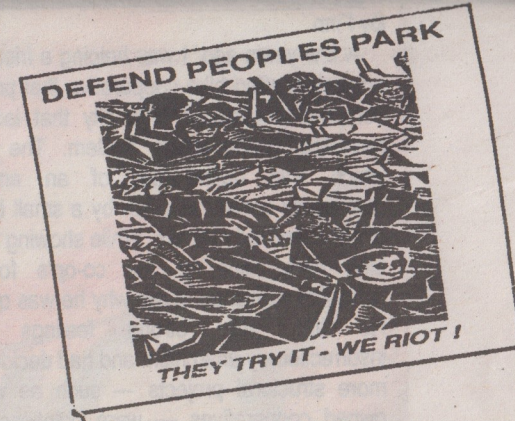
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An anarchist space that hosted the 2014 Barcelona Anarchist Book fair. c/ Creu dels Molers 86, Barcelona, Spain ateneuanarquistapoblesec.noblogs.org
Nosotros - Athens, Greece



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- We forgot to include the postal code for the House of Freedom in Brisbane, Australia - it is 4101. They also would have preferred we list the name as Brisbane Anarchist Library.

- Pogo Cafe in Hackney, UK no longer exists.

- The A-raamatukogu (A-library) in Tartu, Estonia is no longer at the address listed but there is still a punk squat there.

- Here's a list of infoshops in Spain, but we haven't had time to confirm them by press time: alabarricadas.org/noticias/node/19036

Radical center seeking support

The Southern Woman's Bookstore is raising money to open a non-profit feminist bookstore and community center in Denton, TX. Check SouthernWomansBookstore.com for info.

Che Cafe in San Diego under attack

Che Cafe is an all-ages music venue and 35 year-old student cooperative at University of California San Diego that has been a cornerstone of radical thought and action for students and the community. After years of rocky relations with campus authorities, they got an eviction notice in June and a judge ruled in favor of a UCSD eviction lawsuit in October. They may appeal the lawsuit and need political, financial and social support. 9500 Gilman Dr.

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Thanks to the people who made this: Eggplant, Finn, Gina, Glenn, Hayley, Heather, Isabel, Jesse, Judy, Kit, Robin, Soren, William, Xander, and all the authors and artists.

Slingshot New Volunteer Meeting

Volunteers interested in getting involved with *Slingshot* can come to the new volunteer meeting on January 25, 2015 at 4 pm at the Long Haul in Berkeley (see below.)

Article Deadline & Next Issue Date

Submit your articles for issue 118 on February 14, 2015 at 3 p.m.

Volume 1, Number 117, Circulation 20,000
Printed November 14, 2014

Slingshot Newspaper

A publication of Long Haul
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slingshot.tao.ca • [twitter @slingshotnews](https://twitter.com/slingshotnews)

Subscriptions to *Slingshot* are free to prisoners, low income and anyone in the USA with a *Slingshot* Organizer, or \$1 per issue or back issue. International \$3 per issue. Outside the Bay Area we'll mail you a free stack of copies if you give them out for free.

Brooklyn, NY

A community center "for social justice organizing, community empowerment and creative expression" with a bar, cafe, two events spaces, and a co-working space. 214 Starr Street in Brooklyn, N Y 11237 maydayspace.org

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IWW New York City General Membership Branch - Long Island City, NY

Someone recommended this as a contact but we're not sure what happens here other than IWW stuff. Clue us in if you visit. 45-02 23rd St, 2nd Fl, Long Island City, NY 11101 www.wobblycity.org

Pineapple Arts Center - Duluth, MN

A cooperatively-run fine art supply store, staffed by volunteers that offers classes and studio space. 124 W. 1st St. Duluth, MN 55812 218-722-2919 pineapplearts@gmail.com



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Nosotros - Athens, Greece

A free social center with a library and meeting space that hosts a free skool and other projects. Themistokleous 66, Exarchia, Athens, Greece nosotros.gr

Ülase12 - Tallinn, Estonia

A volunteer run social center that features a library, free store, meetings, films, punk shows, vegan dinner and events. Tallinn, Kristiine district at Ülase street 12, Estonia. www.ylase12.org

Corrections to the 2015 Organizer

- The Black Coffee Coop in Seattle, WA is moving October 31 so they won't be at the address we published in 2015. We'll put their new address on our website once we know it.
- Internationalist Books moved from Chapel Hill to 101 Lloyd St, Carrboro NC 27510 on October 1.

- We listed a space called the LA Infoshop at 176 W. Sunset Blvd. based on an email from them, but when someone went to visit, there was just a private business there, not an infoshop. Say it ain't so!

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POCKET ORGANIZER PARTIAL PRODUCT RECALL

Oops — we used a new binding company this year and we've been noticing some poor quality bindings for the pocket sized books (only) — it seems like about 5% of them have a gap in the binding so that one or 2 pages (usually in the first 16 pages of the book) might fall out. If you get a defective one, we are super sorry and we can send you a replacement if necessary. We will credit stores for any defective organizers we mistakenly sent them before we noticed the problem. Look at the ends of it when making your selection and don't buy anything that looks like it has a gap in the binding.

Slingshot Free stuff

We'll send you a random assortment of back issues of *Slingshot* for the cost of postage: Send \$3 for 2 lbs. Free if you're an infoshop or library. Email or call us: slingshot@tao.ca / Box 3051 Berkeley, 94703.

MORAL PANIC ATTACK

callout culture and community

"What do you regard as most humane? To spare someone shame." — Nietzsche

By Margaret Matson

I imagine all people have felt shame at one point or another in their lives. Shame is a prison of the mind and heart that can cage us regardless of space or time. It is easy to feel powerless, alone and inherently flawed given the insurmountable challenges we face. Those of us who struggle to negate the conscripted fate that capitalism and social strata thrust upon us face a critical question. How do we spare ourselves and one another shame?

Moral panic is a sociological phenomena in which individuals or groups are persecuted within a larger social group. These panics are precipitated by the presence of several key ingredients: social order, fear of that social order being threatened, and the existence of taboos — unnameable things which members of the group cannot address without experiencing fear.

A moral panic begins with the accusation of a "folk devil" made by a "moral entrepreneur." This folk devil is accused of causing ill within the community by violating the social order.

sour milk could result in torture and public execution. I find myself giving those tightlipped Protestants the benefit of the doubt. They probably did not consciously seek to murder their female neighbors over land — they were probably truly terrified of the Devil. Ultimately, the young women having these "fits" surely were not aided by the public hangings.

Admitting that anarchist and radical groups have a "social order" may be uncomfortable, and the word "community" can be a touchy subject in and of itself. However, social order forms naturally and inevitably wherever and whenever people participate in groups, no matter how disordered or anti-order the group may be. One can also refer to this organic process as culture. When one is part of a social group, one remembers familiar faces, shares common references and might use cues like dress or speech to identify one another. Most members of radical circles have a sense of what's appropriate and inappropriate to say or do in radical spaces and circles.

There is no such thing as a perfect anarchist. However, many seem to hold an

I feel that I have seen a growing tendency within radical circles towards "callout culture." A callout is a disempowered party publicly calling out another party on their behavior. In theory, it is meant to restore power to the disempowered and create a climate in which accountability can happen. Callouts can result in people re-examining their attitudes and behaviors in ways which inspire a great deal of personal growth, especially when done in a respectful, sincere way. In practice, this is not always the case.

The crux of a callout relies on credibility and authority — how one gains and holds social power. Callouts generally favor whoever has more social currency within their circle. Rather than aiding the disempowered, callouts can give figures of authority more power, more credibility and more attention. Often, victims of oppressive or violent behavior are ignored, dismissed or viewed with distrust when they call out the party who has wronged them. Sometimes, victims of violence are used by others who call out on their behalf, acting without their permission or knowledge. Perhaps just as often, people are falsely

consensus within a group that the called out is guilty until proven innocent, the course is set for actions and outcomes that often are unpredictable and harsh.

People overreact. They start flame wars, get into fights and try to ruin one another's lives — the whole time forgetting that the people they are persecuting with so much self-righteousness are their friends, lovers, housemates, fellow activists and chosen-family. They feel ashamed and shame one another. And the persecution and pain usually doesn't end there. Witch hunts hurt everybody involved. Everybody risks getting burnt at the stake.

The terrible irony is that calling somebody out can often be a violent, oppressive act in and of itself, especially when it results in being blacklisted, forcibly evicted and/or publicly shamed. Often people are called out for being "oppressors," "abusers" or "predators," and these vague terms can follow a person for years, across borders, regardless of their behavior or the original context. It is my heartfelt conviction that we must create our own vibrant forms of justice, sometimes calling one another out and establishing hard boundaries; however, one cannot use callouts to simply punish people, grasp power and recreate the worst aspects of state "justice."

Callouts are rooted in critical social theory, which seeks a dialectic between sociology and free will. Sadly, critical awareness naturally suffers when one is experiencing fear and anxiety. Some questions I have asked myself in these situations and found helpful include: what results do I want? What results do others



Moral panic is a sociological phenomena in which individuals or groups are persecuted within a larger social group. These panics are precipitated by the presence of several key ingredients: social order, fear of that social order being threatened, and the existence of taboos – unnameable things which members of the group cannot address without experiencing fear.

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involved. Everybody's got something at stake.

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Callouts are rooted in critical social theory, which seeks a dialectic between sociology and free will. Sadly, critical awareness naturally suffers when one is experiencing fear and anxiety. Some questions I have asked myself in these situations and found helpful include: what results do I want? What results do others want? Are there material resources involved? How can I help the people that are affected (both accused and accuser)? Am I involved? If I'm not directly involved, why do I want to be? What are my motivations? What level of commitment to my involvement can I really make? How can I take care of my needs, regardless of outcome?

When a crisis erupts within a group, be it large or small, it can take a while to establish enough clarity and calm to even have a dialogue. Often, these situations are complex and take such a high level of commitment to work through, nobody finds healing. I have found solace in at least starting this dialogue internally. When a group experiences a sense



The entrepreneur, often a priest, politician or activist, is quickly and readily validated because of the preexisting level of anxiety amongst the community. The problem becomes more convoluted because it centers upon a topic which is taboo to discuss, making it impossible for people to admit or even recognize their intentions and motivations. Soon, more and more people are accusing one another of deviant behavior and rushing to increasingly drastic measures to rid themselves of anybody that is perceived as a threat to the community, despite the fact that the folk devils were members of the established community to begin with. Moral panic often antecedes genocide.

A small-scale example, well known to many here in the US, is the Salem Witch Trials. Even

idealized image of perfection aloft – constantly comparing themselves and others to it. The perfect anarchist is always an ally to the oppressed, yet an enemy of the oppressors. The perfect anarchist always respects "safe space" and knows how to conduct themselves in almost any social situation. The perfect anarchist is original, individualistic and unapologetic, in part because they never have to apologize. Perhaps within this caricature of perfection, one may see some anarchist taboos inverted: power, oppression and hierarchy. What is "right" for an anarchist? What is "wrong?" How do anarchists hold power? How can an individual be part of a community? How can a community embrace individuality? Why do we hold anarchists to higher standards than everybody else?

accused of wrongdoing by a charismatic individual seeking power over a situation. The folk devil is effectively stripped of all credibility; they are suddenly the subject of distrust, debate and controversy. Sometimes, when somebody asks for accountability, they are really demanding revenge.

Instead of talking directly about the underlying power dynamics in these situations, it is easy to fall in line with whoever is thought to be more credible or whoever holds more authority. There are times when the loudest voices in the room are heard while others are silenced by shouting. Other times it is the quietest voices that carry the most weight. Whispered stories circulate and morph in an endless game of telephone. Meanwhile the storytellers impress upon their audience to not





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A small-scale example, well known to many here in the US, is the Salem Witch Trials. Even before the witch trials erupted, the neighboring communities to the Salem area considered them "quarrelsome." The moral entrepreneurs in this case were several young women who began having "fits," along with the local magistrate, who accused three outliers within the community of witchcraft.

Soon, many were accusing many others of witchcraft. Almost all of those convicted were women. Upon examining the links within the Salem colony, it becomes obvious that many of these accusations had less to do with any real threat of the Devil and more to do with land and inheritance disputes. Needless to say, none of the trials record any frank discussion of sexuality or property.

There was likely real fear that gripped these people, which no doubt escalated as the panic gained momentum. A mysterious headache or

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Many anarchists feel a certain amount of justified fear of the things which threaten their lives and lifestyles. It is natural and logical to have some anxiety regarding homelessness, police violence, surveillance and imprisonment. Not only do anarchists

SMOKING HOT DIALECTICS

experience threats from the outside – we experience them from within. Informants, COINTELPRO, crypto-fascists and fools with no security culture are all threats which can and do harm us. However, this general sense of unease and distrust can lead to outcomes that threaten anarchist projects as much as any state oppression.

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Often, simply asking questions about what actually happened or searching for clarity is viewed as an oppressive, offensive act in and of itself. However, how can one seek justice without even understanding the situation, its context and the desired outcomes of all directly affected? How can one seek accountability without being able to be accountable for one's own words? How can one redistribute power equitably without talking directly about power itself, both individual and systemic?

The definitive characteristics of moral panic are concern, hostility, volatility, consensus and disproportionality of reaction. When somebody is called out for oppressive, offensive or violent behavior, people often naturally react with concern and hostility. When there is a general

How can I help the people that are affected (both accused and accuser)? Am I involved? If I'm not directly involved, why do I want to be? What are my motivations? What level of commitment to my involvement can I really make? How can I take care of my needs, regardless of outcome?

When a crisis erupts within a group, be it large or small, it can take a while to establish enough clarity and calm to even have a dialogue. Often, these situations are complex and take such a high level of commitment to work through, nobody finds healing. I have found solace in at least starting this dialogue internally. When a group experiences a sense



of moral panic, all one can do as an individual is seek moral clarity for themselves. Personally, I do not want to pronounce others as either guilty or innocent, assured that I am often both. I prefer to judge myself, and know that my individual morality challenges me to act with sensitivity, caution, courage, integrity and commitment in all situations. I know that these values do not apply to anybody but me. I am not perfect and I never will be. And I know that a world beyond guilt and innocence is possible.

Good News, Bad News:

Coming of Age in America's Rape Culture

by Maria Siino

I recently started college in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and I have both good and bad news to report from my first year there.

When I first got here, I looked for activities I could be a part of, hopefully ones that were not simply clubs but organizations that felt meaningful to me. There weren't a lot of clubs listed, but among them were the campus GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) and the Feminist Collective. I resolved to go to both. I have since become the president of the Feminist Collective and a casual member of the GSA.

The good news is that last year in particular, The Feminist Collective made some real strides in improving the campus' attitude toward sexual assault. We established a better relationship with the local rape crisis center, we made zines, we held a successful gallery show on the topics of Sex, Kink, and Consent, and we held a successful Take Back the Night event. This year, we are hoping to get the official sexual assault policy changed and have the Residence Assistants be trained in matters of crises and sexual assault. We may be changing things for the better in our tiny community.

The bad news? Well the bad news...is that this isn't really news. At least, the rampant sexual assault rate on campus is not news. It's not scandalous or shocking, because colleges across the country face the same problem. The keynote speaker at our 2013 Take Back the Night said in her speech: "In the 11 years I have been teaching, I have never taught at a school where this process wasn't happening." The process that she was referring to is that of dealing with sexual assault on college

the same problem. If I had gone to the Big Apple, it would have been an issue. Recently in New York City, a student at Columbia University named Emma Sulcowicz was assaulted by a fellow student and brought it to the attention of the staff. In spite of other survivors who made similar claims about the same perpetrator, the college has not brought him to justice. While other students have publicly come out in support of Sulcowicz, the offender has faced no charges. If I had gone to the University of California in my hometown of Berkeley, it definitely would have been a problem. Earlier in 2013, a U.S. federal sexual assault probe was sent to UC Berkeley along with 54 other colleges in the country. UC Berkeley was also among 30 schools that had been reported for mishandling cases of sexual assault in 2013 to the Office for Civil Rights at the U.S. Department of Education.

One might think that looking up sexual assault statistics would help a prospective student choose a college where they might be safest, but apparently this isn't the case either. An article published in Al Jazeera earlier this summer discovered that colleges with ostensibly low rates of sexual assault are often misleading. These colleges frequently show low sexual assault rates because they have discouraged their students from reporting sexual assault, either actively or inadvertently. Surprisingly, the colleges with higher rates of reported sexual assault have actually encouraged their students to report their assaults and seek help, hence the statistics. Unfortunately, this information might only inform a prospective student as to how a college might handle sexual violence on

(though arguably in small quantities and quirky demeanors), but if an issue like rape can't be quashed here, what good is it? I will always love the place where I grew up but I feel that as an adult I can see it more for what it really is. I'm beginning to feel a similar disenchantment about Santa Fe as well.

I wasn't raised in a radical environment. My family is typical in most respects, and as such, I was raised to fear for my safety and follow arbitrary rules that don't actually eliminate sexual assault. Time and time again my parents warned me against being out late. But what can they do? They live in this culture, too. They wanted to keep me safe, and even if it meant letting my brother ride the bus home at night and chewing me out for doing the same thing, I'm sure they don't regret doing it. I can't blame them for being pragmatic in a culture like this one.

Even if I hadn't gone to college, the issue would still be there, I would still face rape culture no matter where I went, and as a woman, this is the life I face.

Victim blaming wasn't the reason they restricted my behavior, though. At least it never seemed that way to me, and they never said it would be my fault if something happened to me. They were just terrified of raising a 5'3" daughter in a world ostensibly different from

Another issue is how counteractions of sexual assault are attempted. Currently, all responsibility to prevent sexual violence is placed upon the victims, who are usually women. Women, especially college students, often carry safety items such as pepper spray, stun guns, rape whistles, and sharp key chains. They also take self defense classes, carry weapons, and ask male friends to walk them to their cars. While these forms of protection are crucial and often empowering, they don't always solve the problem at hand. Rapists need to be held accountable, severe punishment needs to be brought to students who commit sexual assault, and measures should be taken to keep these self defense measures from being necessary. Protection is only one part of eliminating sexual assault; the other is preventing the assaults from occurring in the first place. It's like how I was told not to go out by myself as a teenager; while it was probably the most pragmatic way of keeping me safe, it didn't uproot the problem at its source. On college campuses, women often keep items for protection on their key chains, but obviously the sexual violence hasn't stopped because of it.

So the good news is that people all over the place, including myself and the other members of my school's Feminist Collective, are taking measures to change the culture that we live in. Whether it's teaching women how to defend themselves or educating people on the realities of sexual violence, efforts are being made to stop the secrecy and rape apology that permeates college campuses. The bad

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I remember feeling dismayed (to say the least) upon finding out how badly my school handles sexual assault. The only reason I became less alarmed was by realizing that any college I could have gone to would likely have

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One would think that in liberal havens like Berkeley and Santa Fe that there would be more precautions taken against these issues. Of course having lived in both of these places, I know that simply isn't true. As Aaron Cometbus put it, Berkeley is a "failure" of sorts. Elements of counter-culture still exist here

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So the good news is that people all over the place, including myself and the other members of my school's Feminist Collective, are taking measures to change the culture that we live in. Whether it's teaching women how to defend themselves or educating people on the realities of sexual violence, efforts are being made to stop the secrecy and rape apology that permeates college campuses. The bad news is the fact that it has to be done at all, and that there is so much more work to be done. Rape apologists are everywhere, and some of them might say that we're doing a good thing, idealistic as it may be, but wouldn't question why we have to do this in the first place. They would probably say that the world is a bad place and rape is just a fact of life, even in a college environment that is supposed to be safe and educational. But I refuse to accept that. Until this rape culture is dismantled and my campus is safe, I will never accept a compromise.



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and thoroughly used. We lead a nomadic lifestyle. Travelers are not opposed to working, but we do not resign to a 9-5 mindset and deferred retirement as an acceptable lifestyle. Andrew was a member of this lifestyle — this

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DIRTY KIDS DONE DIRTY

By Dumpsta Love

On August 22 2014 Andrew Kerezman of the "traveling community" — nomadic punks carrying large backpacks who trainhop and hitchhike across the land — was struck by a truck while crossing the street in Grand Junction, Colorado and mortally injured. Immediately, everything seemed wrong at the scene of the accident. Witnesses reported that the truck was going extremely fast when Andrew was hit, but the police at the scene acted as if they didn't care at all. Andrew's friends asked the cops to test the driver for alcohol, but the police refused. Instead, they screamed profanities at us because of our tattered clothes and non-mainstream appearance.

The police formed a physical barrier between us and the driver while the driver remained in his truck for a long while and wasn't asked anything. Andrew lay dying in the street, his face covered in blood. Why weren't the cops acting as if they cared at all? Andrew was a human being wasn't he? His clothes and appearance indicated to the police that he was destitute, but money isn't what gives a human life value.

Society looks at members of the traveling community like garbage because of the way we dress and because we sit in public places. But while we may not have a big car, a house,

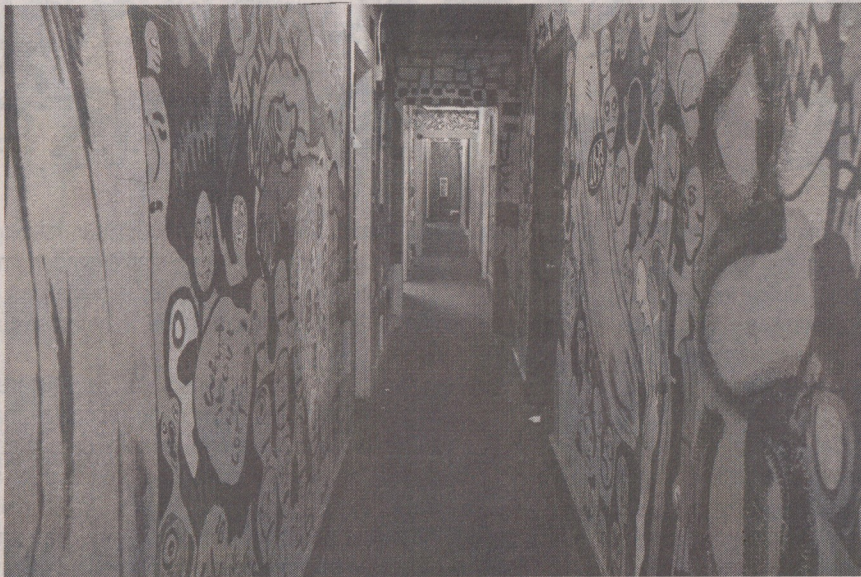
or an office job, we have freedom that mainstream people can only dream about. We're not blinded by the illusion that money will bring us happiness. Many of us have endured hardships and lived as outcasts our whole lives, constantly profiled and treated poorly by those who conform to society's norms. We travel as a means of knowing the world in which we live, meeting new people and visiting old friends, having unforeseen adventures and persevering the difficulties, spreading happiness and love, sharing art and music, being intimate with other cultures and spiritual beliefs, and sometimes just to escape. Though not all travelers are the same, there is an overarching community of compassion and caring. We all share the value of love over money.

We endure burning summers and frozen winters, holding cardboard signs and pointing thumbs. Dirt from the ground we sleep on sifts through everything and covers our skin, like the Earth itself is leaving her mark on us to wear everywhere we go. The natural smells of our bodies are not disdained in our culture. While many of us are reasonable with our hygiene, we don't obey the standards of poison associated with deodorants, perfumes, soaps, etc. Everything we need is contained in the heavy packs we carry. Our clothes are few

and thoroughly used. We lead a nomadic lifestyle. Travelers are not opposed to working, but we do not resign to a 9-5 mindset and deferred retirement as an acceptable lifestyle. Andrew was a member of this lifestyle — this culture, our culture.

After he died, we had a sincere and heartfelt memorial for Andrew burning candles and throwing flowers in the river under the train track trestles. On the road you get to know people's natures very quickly, but a lot of time you know little else. Life isn't cheap on the road — it's priceless.

Mainstream society discriminates against many minority cultures — abuse by the police against people of color is in the news every day. Misinformation created by church, state, and media creates an atmosphere of aggression toward any belief that isn't part of a system such as Anarchy, Atheism, or self sustained living, to name just a few. We are often treated as 'lesser than' by the majority of establishments we encounter, even those places we spend money. People assume we don't matter and will yell profanities at us, attempt to cause us harm, and treat us with general indifference. We are people too and should be treated with basic human decency — home or no home, money or no money. Andrew Kerezman was a person, too.



Co-opt(ed)

By: Three Former Clones

What can we learn about threats to democracy from the closure of Cloyne student co-op at UC Berkeley?

"You may have noticed some campus buildings with two adjacent doors only have one door handle," the University of California Berkeley tour guide cooed through her strangely unsettling smile. Not until she mentioned it did I notice. "That's to prevent people from blockading a door and taking over a building," she explained. The crowd of new students nodded in unison, seemingly unfazed. In the 1960s protesters had chained themselves to the doors of the Chancellor's office in protest of the Vietnam War. The response? No policy changes in regards to the war. But they did make sure to remove the knobs on the Chancellor's door.

The tour ended in Cesar Chavez plaza. This space was designed in the wake of the 1964 Free Speech Movement, in such a way that it would concentrate protests and mass mobilizations and facilitate a quick and

studio. A darkroom. A place where we ate meals together. It was a place to celebrate our friends' victories, and in tragic times, a place to mourn those taken from us.

Through everything, it was always my home, my sanctuary and my rock. It gave me hope in the power of humanity as I watched Occupy lose steam and the world around me seemingly dig deeper its trenches of social stratification, environmental degradation, hopelessness and despair.

Perhaps it should have come as no surprise that Cloyne was a contested space that was destroyed purposefully by those in positions of power. Cloyne was shut down allegedly because of "liability" stemming from "a culture perceived to be tolerant of drugs." Contrary to

entered into weeks of closed executive sessions, crafting their "Cloyne Plan." Cloyne was targeted as a space that fostered substance abuse, with the "solution" being the destruction of a community, rather than any attempt to address the mental health issues that plague, and are systematically ignored by, society at large.

Those weeks Cabinet spent in private executive sessions were weeks the entire community of BSC could have spent having a discussion about the future of Cloyne and the BSC as a whole. Members of Cloyne, and the other student members of BSC, were only given the opportunity to discuss the situation once Cabinet had already decided on a plan. By identifying us as the problem – rather than

process, and the ability to pull votes from your Board representative – each of these processes were made ineffectual. The GMM was cancelled just before the Cloyne Plan was announced, a petition for a referendum signed by the required number of members was

Power structures are created to help the organization grow, or be more efficient, but if they are not consistently critiqued and put under scrutiny, they may co-opt the very democratic process they were supposed to support.

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Co-opted

By: Three Former Clones

What can we learn about threats to democracy from the closure of Cloyne student co-op at UC Berkeley?

"You may have noticed some campus buildings with two adjacent doors only have one door handle," the University of California Berkeley tour guide cooed through her strangely unsettling smile. Not until she mentioned it did I notice. "That's to prevent people from blockading a door and taking over a building," she explained. The crowd of new students nodded in unison, seemingly unfazed. In the 1960s protesters had chained themselves to the doors of the Chancellor's office in protest of the Vietnam War. The response? No policy changes in regards to the war. But they did make sure to remove the knobs on the Chancellor's door.

The tour ended in Cesar Chavez plaza. This space was designed in the wake of the 1964 Free Speech Movement, in such a way that it would concentrate protests and mass mobilizations, and facilitate a quick and efficient police response. Notice it or not, social spaces are often designed to isolate and separate people. Once I began to notice this architecture of separation at Berkeley, I couldn't stop. The architecture of separation is not just a phenomenon found in design or city planning. It is deeply ingrained in our legal, justice and social system. It is everywhere, all the way from our zoning laws down to our door handles.

Which is why, when I encounter those rare but beautiful spaces that do not serve to isolate, but instead facilitate human interaction and transformation, I recognize them as spaces worth fighting for. Unfortunately, these spaces are often singled out and challenged, with some arbitrary justification or another, pulled into the mainstream or pushed out of existence.

Radical spaces and cooperative organizations stay radical only when people are willing to commit wholeheartedly to

studio. A darkroom. A place where we ate meals together. It was a place to celebrate our friends' victories, and in tragic times, a place to mourn those taken from us.

Through everything, it was always my home, my sanctuary and my rock. It gave me hope in the power of humanity as I watched Occupy lose steam and the world around me seemingly dig deeper its trenches of social stratification, environmental degradation, hopelessness and despair.

Perhaps it should have come as no surprise that Cloyne was a contested space that was destroyed purposefully by those in positions of power. Cloyne was shut down allegedly because of "liability" stemming from "a culture perceived to be tolerant of drugs." Contrary to

entered into weeks of closed executive sessions, crafting their "Cloyne Plan." Cloyne was targeted as a space that fostered substance abuse, with the "solution" being the destruction of a community, rather than any attempt to address the mental health issues that plague, and are systematically ignored by, society at large.

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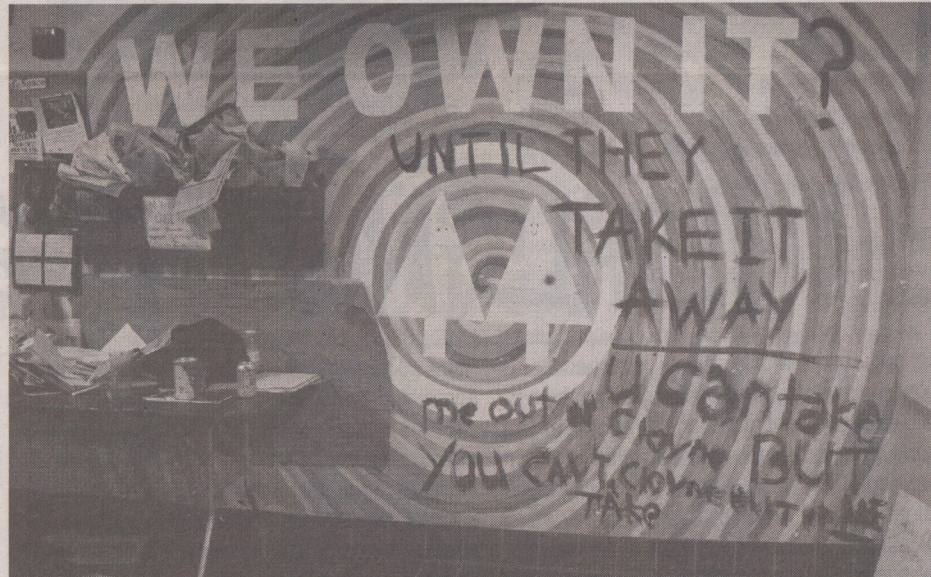
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rejected due to "timeline issues" as well as the membership being "ill-informed," and in order for members to pull their vote from the Cloyne Plan, they had to stay at the Board meeting until five o'clock in the morning, when votes were cast.

Supporters of the "Cloyne Plan" repeatedly emphasized that in order to defend themselves in court and limit their liability, they needed to prove that there had been a genuine cultural shift. They argued that it was necessary for all members to be kicked out in order for a culture shift to occur. They ignored the fact that there was an influx of new membership all the time, and that none of the current membership had lived in the house at the time of the overdose. As an alternative, members of Cloyne proposed a plan that aimed to create a space that would promote healthy living, allowing for open dialogue about substance-use, instead of one that pretended, unrealistically, that all members would commit to the substance-free lifestyle.

When we realized that our community was in jeopardy, we reached out to professionals and organizations with decades of experience in substance-use problems, specifically those aimed towards restorative justice practices.



popular belief, you can polish bullshit. But whatever pretty excuses you may have, at the end of the day, what happened to Occupy, Albany Bulb, and Cloyne – while each unique and distinct – was eviction.

The BSC which operated Cloyne was founded in 1933 to provide cooperative student housing. It operates 17 coop houses and 3 apartments which house 1,300 students.

the solution we could have been – they disenfranchised us as members and ignored the transformation that had already been happening in the house for years.

It's easy for co-ops to be co-opted. People get tired of the structure and the decision-making process. They forget that the structure and process are the foundation of what is distinct about a cooperative. It is, after all, what

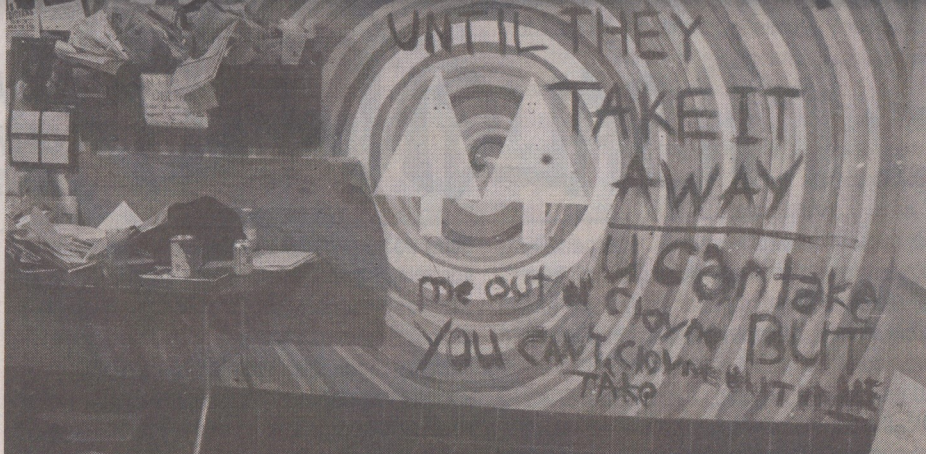
separate people. Once I began to notice this architecture of separation at Berkeley, I couldn't stop. The architecture of separation is not just a phenomenon found in design or city planning. It is deeply ingrained in our legal, justice and social system. It is everywhere, all the way from our zoning laws down to our door handles.

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Radical spaces and cooperative organizations stay radical only when people are willing to commit wholeheartedly to things that are not easy.

I think this is what many people found in Occupy. Occupy was a reclamation of public space. Spaces where we normally hurried past one another were temporarily transformed into places where we slowed down, smiled, conversed, argued, debated, dreamed, and transformed strangers into friends, companions and comrades. What many found in Occupy, I found in Cloyne Court.

Cloyne Court, one block north of the Berkeley campus, was the largest student-housing cooperative in North America - housing 149 students - under the umbrella organization of the Berkeley Student Cooperatives (BSC). But it was much more than that. It was the place I came home to after getting beaten by police on the lawn next to the Mario Savio steps, and blinded by tear gas in Oakland. It was a music venue, a community center, and an art gallery. A yoga



popular belief, you can polish bullshit. But whatever pretty excuses you may have, at the end of the day, what happened to Occupy, Albany Bulb, and Cloyne - while each unique and distinct - was eviction.

The BSC which operated Cloyne was founded in 1933 to provide cooperative student housing. It operates 17 coop houses and 3 apartments which house 1,300 students. Residents elect a board of directors and although individual houses have some autonomy, the board with heavy influence from paid professional management staff ultimately calls the shots.

The details of our ordeal are convoluted; our story is only one of many radical organizations that are bent into conformity by scare tactics. The impetus behind the ultimate decision to prevent all Cloyne residents from renewing their contracts, forcing all of us to move at the end of the spring 2014 semester, was the out-of-court settlement of a lawsuit regarding the drug overdose of John Gibson, a Cloyne resident in 2010. Gibson's mother sued the BSC, claiming the BSC was aware of a drug tolerant culture in Cloyne and had done nothing to stop it. In December 2013, the BSC's insurance carrier settled the lawsuit, and with the start of Spring semester, the BSC Cabinet (a sub-set of the Board of Directors)

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It's easy for co-ops to be co-opted. People get tired of the structure and the decision-making process. They forget that the structure and process are the foundation of what is distinct about a cooperative. It is, after all, what defines a co-op. Power structures are created to help the organization grow, or be more efficient, but if they are not consistently critiqued and put under scrutiny, they may co-opt the very democratic process they were supposed to support. Often, when decision-making is opened up to a larger group, while it may be less efficient, the airing of many ideas in an open, collaborative environment can allow the best ideas to float to the top.

The architecture of separation...is deeply ingrained into our legal, justice, and social system.

BSC Board members, Cabinet and the paid executive staff resisted and ignored bylaws. While the BSC technically has direct democratic safeguards - an annual General Membership Meeting (GMM), a referendum

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When we realized that our community was in jeopardy, we reached out to professionals and organizations with decades of experience in substance-use problems, specifically those aimed towards restorative justice practices. Weeks after Cabinet presented their plan, they still had no comment to how restorative justice practices would be implemented in the New Cloyne Court. In the end, we were the doorknob that got removed, and the issue of substance abuse and mental health was left untouched.

Radical spaces and cooperative organizations stay radical only when people are willing to commit wholeheartedly to things that are not easy. These spaces have helped us grow as individuals, and have facilitated communities that embrace the innumerable potentialities of humanity. Their structures must constantly be questioned, critiqued, and challenged in order to ensure that the membership retains complete autonomy over decision-making processes. Without this dedication, these beautiful, transformative, autonomous spaces will be gone and forgotten.



By Otto Destruct

Queer theory liberates by exploding the bounds of gender and making everything possible — bodies and identities that had existed all along now have the opportunity to be recognized and acknowledged, to be “real”. At the heart of queer theory is the presumption that all identities are legitimate, that a person’s gender is as idiosyncratic and specific as they are, that they are sovereign in their right to determine what that gender is, and that gender expressions can be described as occupying points (sometimes multiple points) on a spectrum, from femme to butch to androgyne, with all kinds of interests in all kinds of bodies, in all kinds of combinations. Queer theory can be seen, then, as a kind of gender existentialism, in the sense that it’s up to each of us to really look at ourselves, be honest, be brave, and decide for ourselves who and what we are — and nobody has the right to tell us we aren’t, or that what we are is wrong or ugly. We have a right and a responsibility to be honest with ourselves!

Suppose this soul-searching yields surprising results. Suppose the queer (we are all queer now) discovers what they really want and who they really are looks a lot like what we might call a traditional gender and sex role — that despite some variation and some play with image, they are essentially heterosexual. This can be uncomfortable for a lot of people. Are they a “real” queer now? By acknowledging, even to themselves, that they are more-or-less hetero, do they become part of a structure of oppression? Some parts of our scene use words like “cis” as derogatory terms, as if systematic oppression were a product of our bodies instead of our culture. Nobody wants to

This is a drag for at least two reasons. By escaping to an identification and appearance that looks more “queer” than people feel or in ways that they don’t really identify with is contrary to the spirit of queer theory itself. It contradicts the wide-open, liberatory aspect of queer theory by enforcing a new orthodoxy — this time an orthodoxy of glitter instead of grey flannel. It also gives people a way to avoid thinking about their heterosexuality and whatever privilege that might entail.

Creating a new, queered heterosexuality is a way to create a world that is much more free

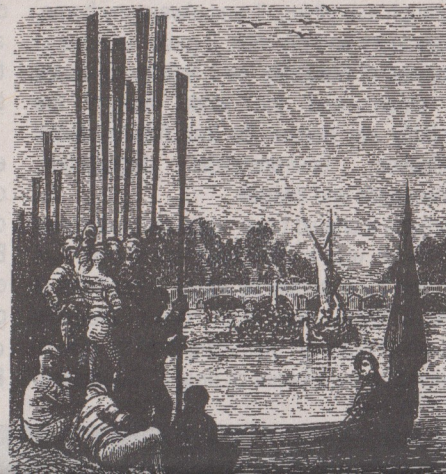
Accepting the prospect of a Queered heterosexuality will allow us to recognize that the heterosexual Queer is already here.

of oppression. Some people imagine a world where there are no heterosexuals but this would take severe repression of peoples’ desires and probably organized violence. It’s more practical and certainly more in line with Anarchist and queer values to promote the development of a new, queered heterosexuality than it is to exterminate heterosexuals from the face of the earth. Queering ourselves is a lot more honest, more comfortable, and ultimately less oppressive, than it is for any of us to feel like we have to pretend to be something other than what we are.

I am often mistaken for more queer than I “really” am. My gender presentation takes many cues from a familiar kind of human

use the fantastic backdoor to masculinity (if you’ll pardon the expression) that gay men’s culture built. Butch leather daddy style is an over-representation of masculinity — it reduces (or elevates) signifiers of traditional manhood, at times to the point of satire. By displaying this over-identified style I can indicate that I am male and masculine while simultaneously indicating that I know (and I assume you know) that all masculinity is a kind of put-on, a Halloween costume. It is a lie that tells the truth.

I had always wanted to be masculine — that’s just how I feel inside. At the same time, I grew up reacting to the disgusting excesses of traditional men and manhood that I saw around me, and wanted to distance myself from what masculinity means culturally. It wasn’t until very recently that I could accept, thanks to the popular ascent of queer theory, that all gender is a kind of game of signs and that I could actually be as male as I wanted to be.



real human being who is interested in relating. Having an identifiable, even stable gender, and simultaneously defying gender expectations is part of what it means to be a heterosexual queer.

Accepting the prospect of a queered heterosexuality will allow us to recognize that the heterosexual queer is already here. I call myself “traditionally masculine” and in a lot of ways that’s true, but what’s traditionally masculine about my desire to place mine and others’ emotional experience in the fore of how I understand us and our choices? What’s traditionally masculine about valorizing communication and understanding above action? What’s traditionally masculine about admitting I’m often wrong and hoping to learn from others? These are traits that are often described as “feminine.” Is there really such a contradiction that I should display these too?

And what about heterosexual desire for non-traditional gender expressions of the “opposite” gender? Or for hyper-expressions? What about people who are open to all kinds of new experiences? In a queer world, does anyone really have to be thought of in essentialist terms?

The heterosexual queer should be permitted to be who they are because the heterosexual queer has really important work to do toward the liberation of all people. The normative standards of traditional heterosexuality are so enmeshed with patriarchy, homophobia, transphobia and other kinds of cultural and literal violence that we must queer, question, critique and reinvent it. To accept one’s queer heterosexuality, to be heterosexual but to understand that position as an open prospect, subject to change from within, is a

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Creating a new, queered heterosexuality is a way to create a world that is much more free

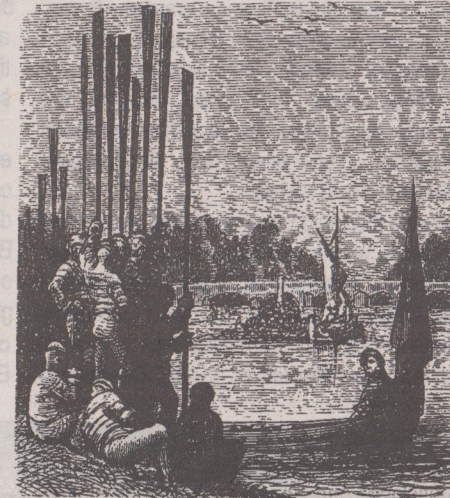
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CREATIVE MISALIGNMENT CHALLENGING CONFORMITY WITH SELF-EDUCATION



By Matti Salminen

At the age of 22, I began to take self-education seriously and I ventured far from my psychological center. This venture took the shape of seclusion—of emotional exile. It was at this time that I also began to believe I had a rat in my brain. My life was broken. And slowly the pieces of what I had left were lost in madness.

For 10 years, in addition to believing I had a rat in my brain, I also believed that if I didn't spend the rest of my life in jail I'd be the most tortured man in history.

Beginning at age 14, I frequently broke the law but caused no real harm to anyone. I was trying to prove my worth by stepping out into the world facing the wrong direction. When I

One population which society is especially misaligned towards is those suffering from mental illness. It might be better to say "suffering from a mental health system which was created out of social control."

Madness is not organic, even if there are biological markers, which indicate it to be of natural origin. Suffering is not genetic. What is natural is an alternative experience and perception of the world; however, what is unnatural and prohibitive is for those alternate expressions of character to be a source of depravity.

My intention in writing this essay isn't to denounce our system of psychiatric care or

other socio-political institutions. I wish to share something that I understood deep down, even as an adolescent. That is creative maladjustment.

Creative maladjustment is resistance to societal standards. These standards breed hostility, segregation, poverty, homelessness, and overall inequality. We are taught early in school that if we work hard we will get ahead. But we are, as a society, working hard so that the wealthiest and the most powerful may exploit the most vulnerable.

Living in an unjust society means that we—as citizens—must venture off the beaten path. We all must find a way to survive in this world

without serving indignity or injustice. To do so is to be creatively maladjusted.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke on the subject of creative maladjustment to a crowd at Western Michigan University, on December 18, 1963. In this speech, Dr. King spoke of the sacrifice necessary to move society towards a state, which would allow dignity and freedom for all. Dr. King believed, then, that a new order was emerging—one in which the creatively maladjusted would rise up for equality.

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Beginning at age 14, I frequently broke the law but caused no real harm to anyone. I was trying to prove my worth by stepping out into the world facing the wrong direction. When I was seventeen, I was arrested and charged with burglary, possession of stolen goods, and driving under the influence.

Knowing what I do now, I see how my recklessness and mischief precipitated the emotional exile, which led to my "madness." But madness is defined by an oppressive socio-political construct known as the mental health system. Our mental health system is part of a larger network of social institutions, which divest too many capable citizens of freedom and equality.

All societal constructs serve a paradigm, which has aligned itself with the needs of the wealthiest and most powerful.

This society has shown itself to be oppressive towards human difference in all forms. Great suffering and injustice are prevalent due to the narrow perspective of what is a healthy, happy, or productive human being. Many people in our society are poor and homeless because they don't work. And this goes on because social injustice is big business—there is no other reason.

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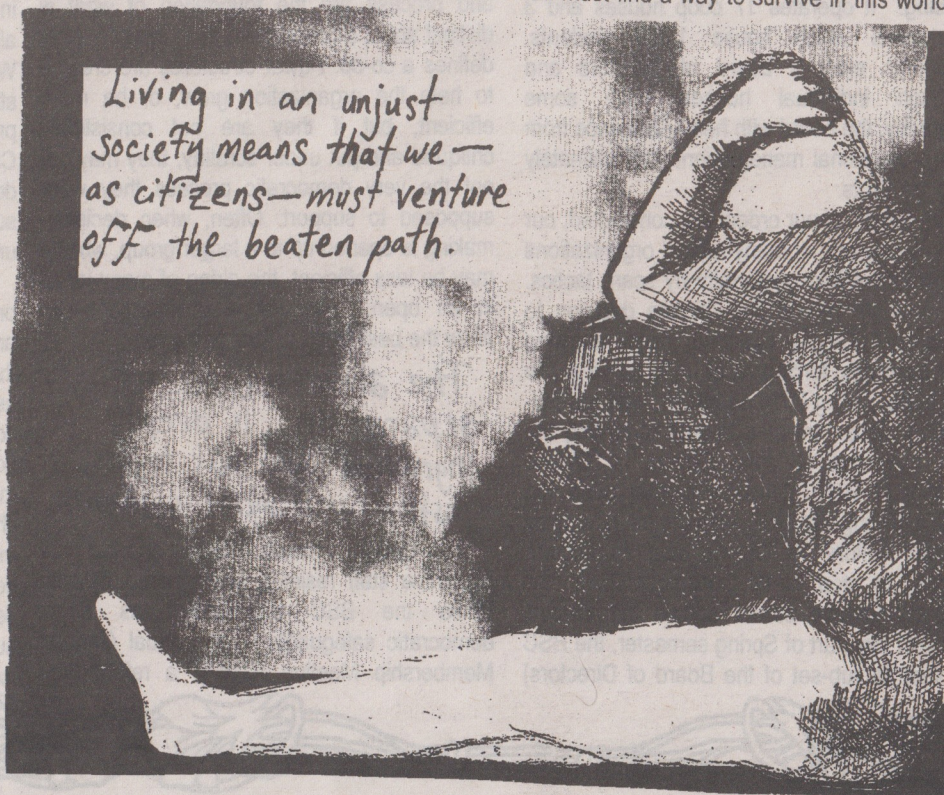
Looking back, I believe I saw something in human potential, which incited me to venture far from the norm. School did not provide the resources I needed to probe the depths of my psyche or my soul. Pursuing a misspent youth and self-education put me on a path towards intellectual freedom.

Many of my heroes growing up were creatively maladjusted people—some were people of color, some suffered through poverty for their art, and others pursued self-education. These heroes showed me that we are not, as individuals, predestined for anything.

Years have gone by now since I began cultivating my mind without indoctrination into any formal institution. Those years have allowed me to free myself and to live an existence that promotes inner peace and human compassion.

No individual can ever truly compensate to lead a sane life while living in an insane world. And thus, creatively misaligning yourself with the world you live in is to exhort personal truth throughout your life, your work, and your spirituality. This is the only natural response to the unnatural disorder of our modern world.

Our society will only right itself when conformity is wholly invalidated.



EXISTENTIAL COMPOST

STAYING INSPIRED INSPITE OF PAIN

Continued from Page 1

remained of my affinity group and preparing to do jail support, I felt pretty shaken by the amount of violence that had gone down so quickly and was wondering whether we'd accomplished anything positive. I got pretty bitter and jaded about direct action when the protest barely showed up on the news. Awareness hadn't been raised, other actions hadn't followed, and whatever sense of temporary autonomy we'd felt had been rapidly beaten down.

Engaging in radical politics means being aware of intensely pervasive structures of hierarchy and oppression. It means having dreams of a better world that are complex and idealistic, and it is easy to feel that those dreams may never come to fruition. As activists, we often hold ourselves to unrealistic standards of being the Perfect Revolutionary, a

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person who feels confident in their knowledge of how to dismantle hierarchy and restructure a new world, who speaks in the right lexicon and groks the right theories. Faced with such standards and an immense sense of powerful opposition, feelings of despair, alienation, and burnout are common.

There are numerous schools of thought within anarchism. Some — such as anarcho-syndicalism — place great emphasis on coherent theory and organized collective effort. Others, especially those influenced by situationism, are more focused on deconstructing organization and engaging in acts of social disruption — these schools of thought are often called “post-left” anarchism.

...what can we do to stay inspired when we feel unsure if the world we want will ever exist?

Regardless of the details of theory and preferred tools for enacting change, the idea of a functional stateless society is very broad and complex. Getting to a point where such a world is feasible requires massive change in social infrastructure, and while I'm certainly not in opposition to idealistic end goals, I do support framing one's personal politics in a way that encourages practical action without leading to “I want The Revolution or no change at all” burnout. Because we as anarchists advocate for dismantling structures that are mind blowingly powerful and pervasive, what can we do to stay inspired when we feel unsure if the world we want will ever exist?

There is no single correct answer to this question, but I can speak to my own experiences. I dropped out of radicalism for a few years — not because I was tired or didn't have enough time, but because I felt powerless. I came back into the scene after joining up with some anti-prison organizers at a transgender health conference. They were part



of a collective that believed in the eventual abolition of the prison industrial complex, but in the meanwhile, had concrete ideas for improving the lives of incarcerated folks. I realized it was possible to hold to ideals I believed in but had little hope of seeing — like the abolition of prisons — without falling into an existential rut. That sense of hopelessness was tempered by a sense of empowerment at being

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able to do *something* — like hooking up reentering prisoners with healthcare, or running copy scams, or sneaking AIDS resource guides into prisons where they were banned. Tangible work that felt effective and meaningful, especially within the context of a tight-knit collective, is what brought me back into the fold.

Housing co-ops, worker owned collectives, and community gardens may not be The Revolution, but they're valuable in that they create alternatives that make tangibly positive differences in people's lives. I've heard people dismiss these kinds of projects — “Why spend

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so much time on gardens when we ought to be rioting?” — but this sort of work builds the foundation of the world we want (and you know, it isn't mutually exclusive with rioting anyway). Endeavors such as free clinics, infoshops, and community gardens are radical in that they aim to transform the way basic human needs are met. Each project is a tiny pocket of transformation that may one day swell and synthesize with others to form a new world. Even if they don't, those projects make concrete improvements in our lives in the present moment, giving us the hope and energy to move forward.

DIRTBAG KINGDOM

By Johnny Sunset

There are no kings in the dirtbag kingdom. Here at the bottom of the barrel, as construction workers and cooks and dump

steel, and the octave key, and the way each orifice farther from the origin of vibration must be larger to shift the frequency within Pythagorean musical ratio. He tells me the gun oil for the rifle would keep the leather pads

I call up my friend in Tennessee to discuss the blueprint for a cheaply reproducible backyard stream hydroelectric generator.

They will know the dirtbags by our inventions. By our circumventions of what is

Three of us go to the lake after a long shift and drink beer until three in the morning. One brags about hand-to-hand combat skills. I challenge him to a wrestling match, hop off the tree branch, chide him. He has me over his

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person who feels confident in their knowledge of how to dismantle hierarchy and restructure a new world, who speaks in the right lexicon and groks the right theories. Faced with such standards and an immense sense of powerful opposition, feelings of despair, alienation, and burnout are common.

infrastructure, and while I'm certainly not in opposition to idealistic end goals, I do support framing one's personal politics in a way that encourages practical action without leading to "I want The Revolution or no change at all" burnout. Because we as anarchists advocate for dismantling structures that are mind blowingly powerful and pervasive, what can we do to stay inspired when we feel unsure if the world we want will ever exist?

of a collective that believed in the eventual abolition of the prison industrial complex, but in the meanwhile, had concrete ideas for improving the lives of incarcerated folks. I realized it was possible to hold to ideals I believed in but had little hope of seeing - like the abolition of prisons - without falling into an existential rut. That sense of hopelessness was tempered by a sense of empowerment at being

anyway). Endeavors such as free clinics, infoshops, and community gardens are radical in that they aim to transform the way basic human needs are met. Each project is a tiny pocket of transformation that may one day swell and synthesize with others to form a new world. Even if they don't, those projects make concrete improvements in our lives in the present moment, giving us the hope and energy to move forward.

DIRTBAG KINGDOM

By Johnny Sunset

There are no kings in the dirtbag kingdom. Here at the bottom of the barrel, as construction workers and cooks and dump truck drivers and parking meter change collectors, we see clearly. Our exchanges are exchanges of skills, not currency. Our promises are made and fulfilled in moments shared between free individuals. There is a bloodless justice. Our justice is spontaneous will.

My neighbor helps me move my bed two houses down and up the stairs. I cook him sausage biscuits. We get whisky drunk and hop the fence to his yard. We dig holes for pylons in ground riddled with bottle glass and bullet casings to build half a shed in the empty lot owned by the city, well past midnight by headlamp light.

Down here on the lower rungs, if we sustain the health of our minds and bodies, the weight of oppression reveals the potential for freedom. By the very definition of who and where we are, we are made to imagine the possibility of a lawless world.

The construction worker shares his drugs with me. We talk conspiracy and chain smoke on the balcony. He shows me the inner machinations of an exacto knife. The intricate simplicity. The spring steel. The blade carriage. The rails of the knife train. In return I unsheathe my saxophone and we examine the tiny cylinders of yes is it really again the spring

steel, and the octave key, and the way each orifice farther from the origin of vibration must be larger to shift the frequency within Pythagorean musical ratio. He tells me the gun oil for the rifle would keep the leather pads from sticking. And he gifts me a breechloader shotgun registered to someone we both despise, as a token of friendship.

We are dirtbags, which is to say we are human beings, which is to say we are terrible

I call up my friend in Tennessee to discuss the blueprint for a cheaply reproducible backyard stream hydroelectric generator.

They will know the dirtbags by our inventions. By our circumventions of what is believed to be possible. Problems are obstacles. Obstacles are challenges. Challenges are to be overcome. Our anthem is the rusty banjo and the voice that skips into falsetto. Our dialogue is thick with profane

Three of us go to the lake after a long shift and drink beer until three in the morning. One brags about hand-to-hand combat skills. I challenge him to a wrestling match, hop off the tree branch, chide him. He has me over his shoulder then down and pinned in twenty seconds but I dance around him every moment, up until the end when I can't move or breathe. I tap out. He asks if I'm satisfied. I say one more. The third still up in the tree branch high as a kite, laughing like a maniac. As my opponent takes me down again. We rise from the ground together, and shake hands.

Dirtbags do not shrink from confrontation. We accept it and love it as an exchange of ability, as a psychological exercise, as an intimate exchange.

After the wrestling match I'm driven home to find my whole block roped off by the police. Another homicide, the fifth in a year. I am drunk and I talk shit to the police officer who won't tell me a damn thing or let me through the line. I've lived here a long time, I know everyone, what the fuck happened. I can't tell you that. What the fuck happened, who was it. I can't tell you anything. Well fuck you I'm going home I live here.

*We are dirtbags, which is to
say we are human beings,
which is to say*

*we are
terrible and*



and beautiful. And if to be terrible is to have the strength of will to reject the system which might coddle us if we subjugated ourselves to it, we must be terrible. And if to be beautiful is to imagine the ideal beyond that subjugation, we must be beautiful.

slang. Our hands are the hands that build and demolish. Our world is the real world, and here at the bottom we can see the foundation of the whole rickety garbage heap. We can see how a single match, careless or placed with the greatest of care, could bring the whole structure to ash.

I bring my new friend figs stolen from a tree in someone's backyard, french bread and

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I bring my new friend figs stolen from a tree in someone's backyard, french bread and gouda cheese filched from a restaurant where I work to pay rent. I make her a sandwich on a small cutting board in the saloon of a sailboat.

By the very definition of who and where we are, we are made to imagine the possibility of a lawless world.

She tells me weeks later in a drunken stupor that she has celiac disease and that goddamn sandwich made her shit every hour for the better part of a week but she ate it anyway.

They will know us by our generosity. Because we dirtbags are generous with our pleasure, and generous with our pain. They will know us by our honor. Our honor will shame them.

moment, up until the end when I can't move or breathe. I tap out. He asks if I'm satisfied. I say one more. The third still up in the tree branch high as a kite, laughing like a maniac. As my opponent takes me down again. We rise from the ground together, and shake hands.

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And the next night, after another long shift, across the street from my house at the place where he was shot. Lit and wavering, winking out as the wax gathers, the candles spelling out a name I recognize. Of a seventeen year old boy. Who had no choice but to sell. Who owed someone something, maybe, that was worth, at that moment in time, to the man with the gun, more than his life.

The candles, and the poster paper ramshackle taped to the fence, and the signatures and good byes of those who loved or knew or cared or heard or thought to sketch a figment of love in pen or pencil or chalk or blood or whatever, whatever the fuck was available.



see the stars

by
Teresa Smith

war, capital, human extinction)

doesn't even know me to make my shoes or grow my food."

We're all getting excited now.

"Man!" one of them says, on a roll: "how many people do you think you're coercing to labor for you? How big is your invisible slave cloud? Ten people? A hundred? All those people out in the burbs who only use money to get things, I'll bet if you add all the hours up, they've got slave clouds of thousands of people. And they don't even know it because this money stuff stands in for the labor—for the real human connection of wanting to do stuff for each other."

In the excitement, one of the young men offers me a bottle of homebrew, "I made this myself, I insist!"

I take the gift and I thank him, but my face contorts with fear. *A gift.*

A common tactic used by rapists is giving things to their targets.

In the month leading up to him raping me, the guy from my theatre group started forcing favors upon me – fixing my computer without asking, buying me food, giving me gifts I didn't want.

In *The Gift of Fear*, violent crime investigator Gavin de Becker warns women to watch out for gifts and favors—they are a tactic used by rapists to disarm their targets, to make them feel guilty, like they owe something to the rapist. This allows the rapist to swoop past their boundaries, enter their homes and assault them.

And here's a pattern in the logic of invasion: "We'll come in and give you books, Human Rights – we'll even give you democracy, the greatest gift ever!" And watch the local people's shock as tanks roll in, as armed soldiers are shooting their teenagers, drones dropping bombs on their dinner parties.

Is capital really congealed labor? Or is it a symbol of the tension between those who wish to give, and those who take without asking?

I still haven't been able to forgive my rapist, though I've run circles inside myself trying. The emotional pain seems to be stuck in my body.

punishment thing—it was simply a way to respect the target for speaking up. It meant the community could harbor those who need to heal, rather than shielding their abusers. And in these spaces, it wasn't just one person or group upholding the safe space—cis-males were equally vocal and committed as everyone else to creating consent-based community.

This new wave of anarchists understands that addressing abuse is not some afterthought, but is the core of creating post-capitalist communities. But like any abstraction, consent-based safe space could easily be overused. As one space-keeper explains, "Safe space shouldn't be treated as a decision-making process, but as a problem-solving tool." Safe Space practices are not a cave to climb into, but something to help us see through the haze in those moments when abuse does arise. Some people are afraid of safe space practices, afraid they will be misused by liars. They are justified in that fear, because that risk is always there. But if we fail to create equitable and thriving self-supporting communities, we stand facing a far bigger problem.

The myth-weavers of capital dazzle us with a pseudo-mathematical fantasy world of random chance, a world of competition that is supposed to be "natural," even though it defies our deeply cooperative evolutionary disposition. We are forced into this system because our food, clothing, shelter, and care is held hostage by it. But many of us choose to enter this system because we are afraid of individuals, and we don't trust our communities to protect us from abuse. Capital offers easy shelter by sterilizing the whole messy chaos of social reality, and distilling it into a single question: "How do I make profit?"

So we scrape the tops off of mountains. We strategically create famines throughout the Global South. We tear out the public rail systems and replace them with roads. We inflict armed occupations within our borders and around the world. We raze forests, and pump poison into our air, into our water, into our minds with advertisements. We inflict



I can almost see the stars

ANGER WARNINGS: rape, war, capital, human extinction

joined off campus. Reeling in the post-trauma weirdness, I sought emotional support from the people closest to me.

I called my foster mom, who promptly informed me that "this is why we shouldn't be so friendly to people."

Hoping for a female mentor to tell me I was okay, I went to my boss and a professor. Instead, they also informed me that my "friendliness" had brought it on.

I went to my friends and classmates, who asked questions like, "What were you wearing? How much time did you spend with him beforehand?"

I was starting to get defensive now. I began revising my story, trying to tell it in such a way that I wouldn't be blamed. I tried leaving out labels like "rape" and "sexual assault," and just described the bare details of having my body touched without my consent. Still, I was questioned, blamed every time.

The terror that I felt on that first day never dissipated.

I spoke to people in the theatre community about it, and they told me it wasn't their problem, "Go get a restraining order." I did so, and discovered that this wouldn't prevent the rapist from going to the theatre meetings. "Was there alcohol involved?" the judge insisted to ask at the restraining order hearing.

Everywhere I went for support, I was put on the defense for my clothing choices, my personality, my behavior. Even the people who blamed the rapist said things like, "You should have been able to sense he was going to do that."

I was back in that Trauma Space I knew as a child. But now, catastrophe seemed to lurk inside all other human beings. I knew now that anyone could violate me—anyone could bypass the will of my mind and touch my body without my consent—and that I would be blamed for it.

I am no longer a friendly person. Fear has settled into my bones, and I've found that I become exhausted if I spend too much time in the presence of other people. An entire

or so people who spoke to me about their experiences of assault, only two of them chose to report it publicly.

It's the wall of silence that allows Rapetopia to continue—people keep buying into the myth that they can move to a "rape-free zone," but it is in those spaces, lacking any kind of community cohesion, in which rapists end up having the most power over individuals' lives.

Before the rape, I used to travel alone, by Greyhound, by train. I hitchhiked in Alaska. I made friends easily, and made a point to talk to strangers, to pull people into loopy philosophical conversations. I read a book a day or more and dated people of multiple genders. I was also very protective about how and when my body was touched.

After the rape, I no longer liked being with people, but being alone was even worse. I moved in with one cis-man after another and pushed them into protective roles. I continued volunteering, but my role in community was very different. My conversations became linear and didactic; I was afraid to wander. I stopped traveling, and didn't like to leave the house alone. I couldn't concentrate: reading, watching movies, so many pleasures fell away. I didn't care how my lovers touched me anymore. My body was the site of my betrayal, it no longer belonged to me.

The human animal is at such a beautiful, but dark point in our evolution. Only 50,000 or so years ago, our ability to use tools blossomed into a region of the brain known as Broca's area, the seat of language. Mix that with our highly-developed prefrontal cortices (which facilitate planning), and you get a creature with the uncanny ability to hold symbolic tools inside its head, and to use those symbols to direct its actions. This ability has allowed us to travel to the moon, but it comes with a dark underside.

After I was raped, I thought my rapist was simply insane. But in the years since it happened, another possibility has lodged

doesn't even know me to make my shoes or grow my food."

We're all getting excited now.

"Man!" one of them says, on a roll: "how many people do you think you're coercing to labor for you? How big is your invisible slave cloud? Ten people? A hundred? All those people out in the burbs who only use money to get things, I'll bet if you add all the hours up, they've got slave clouds of thousands of people. And they don't even know it because this money stuff stands in for the labor—for the real human connection of wanting to do stuff for each other."

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I can almost

TRIGGER WARNINGS: rape

Peace is not the absence of tension, but the presence of justice. ~MLK

In autumn of 2004, I joined the astronomy club at a small university nestled in the Cascade Mountains. Eager to share our view of the stars, we built a wooden cart for the school's telescope (a high-powered soviet-designed scrappy-looking thing we lovingly called "The Light Bucket"), and every clear Friday, we wheeled our scope out to the footpath next to the Science Building and enticed passersby to join us: "Want to look at another galaxy?"

Some nights, the football team was practicing in the field next to us, and the sky seemed lost behind the blinding haze of stadium lights. That didn't stop us.

"How can you see through all that light pollution?" confused passersby wanted to know.

"See for yourself," one of us would reply. Such a jolt of surprise overtook the person when they held their eye to the little circle of glass and saw a stunning globular cluster, the rings of Saturn, or whatever delightful glowing mass we'd been gazing at.

"How am I seeing this?" they always wanted to know.

Unlike magicians, scientists *always* explain their tricks: "Our pupils constrict to protect themselves from the light, but telescopes don't. These tools can see past the optical illusion of light pollution, reminding us that even under a blank sky, the light of the stars still reaches us."

Ten years later and a thousand miles away, a rapist is at large in the East Bay radical community.

One of the collectives received an email warning from a comrade in a distant city, and now the rapist has been spotted at local infoshops and hacker spaces. Some of us are in a dilemma: "Do we ban him?"

So far, no formal decision has been made. No one wants to deal with it until we have to.

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rapist, though I've circles inside myself trying. The emotional pain seems to be stuck in my body. It could have been released with the help of my friends, but they weren't ready.

Not long after he raped me, my rapist became general manager of the volunteer theatre group. I later learned that several other women were raped by him during his ascent. All of us left after being raped—it is insanity to be in the presence of your abuser—especially when you both know they can do it again anytime they want.

What has been mindboggling is the prevalence of this pattern as I have moved on to organizations and projects. So many spaces are held by a league of abusers and their apologists. As I move through the Bay talking about my projects, I inevitably meet the victims and their friends. I am losing my trust for cis-men in power. Everytime I meet a charismatic, forceful man in charge of something, I immediately wonder how many women aren't in the room because of him.

Why do I want to kill rapists? That much should be obvious by now.

Why do I bother to hope? That's the bigger question.

Anarchy is self-control. Before I was an anarchist, I saw these words carved into the cement near my home in NW Portland.

Anarchy is self-control. These words were a glimmer of hope that stayed with me, and after a partner's job led me to move with him to the Bay Area, I found myself seeking out Anarchists, joining the Slingshot collective, moving into cooperative housing.

Gradually, I've come to realize that *Anarchy is not just self-control.*

Three years ago, I spent some time at Hellarity House. It was my first experience of a radical open-door squat governed by anarchist consensus process. At my first house meeting, I saw an amazing thing: a traveler was asked to leave—without malice or punishment—because he had touched someone without their consent. Over the next few weeks, this happened several more times. There were never tribunals questioning either party, or moments of forcing the target to "provide evidence" (consent violation, by definition, can *only* be expressed as the word of one person against another anyway). Watching this process, I saw the women in the house becoming stronger, more outspoken. I felt stronger. Even though the space was filled with rowdiness, arguments, and all sorts of spontaneity and danger, I felt drawn there because I knew that if I asked someone to back off, they'd respect me. A few years later, I found myself at the Sudo Room hackerspace, and similarly witnessed a consent violator being asked to leave. finally shut off.

There was no malice—this wasn't a

pump poison into our air, into our water, into our minds with advertisements. We inflict unfair trade laws upon entire nations, leading droves of people to cross our borders to take back the value that's been stolen from them.

Abuse is one of the strongest motivating forces that compels us to invite capital into our lives. Capital feeds upon the forces of fear and artificial randomness, and it holds us in a place of stasis, walking dead, traumatized, trapped in the fantasy of "profit is the only thing that matters." As we organize ourselves to compete for profit, and it is the bullies, rapists, and murderers who rise to the top, directing us as we destroy each other and ourselves—with the destruction of our planet's life support system treated as mere "collateral damage."

Imagine for a moment that the apocalypse isn't something in the future, but something that has been happening since humans gained the power to justify raping and murdering each other.

Archaeological sites new and ancient show mass graves—horrors beyond our wildest nightmares—we are just barely waking up from this apocalypse.

Look into our past, and you'll see there never has been a golden age—only an apocalypse—and now from this nightmare we are finally just waking up.

Consent.

I want to write the word in the sky every day for each person I've known who was hurt or raped.

Consent.

Can a single word, a single concept help bring back light back into the eyes of the traumatized, help us reactivate our parasympathetic nervous systems?

Consent.

Sing life back into our species with a single word.

Consent.

Wake up! Here is a splash of cold water in the face:

Consent.

Pray for consent.

Ask for consent.

Destroy the ideas of a Rape Zone, a War Zone—no one deserves to be touched without their consent. We need to dismantle the last of the cultural myths that are holding the apocalypse in place.

Consent, consent, consent.

Demand consent.

Defend consent.

Uphold consent in your spaces. And as the haze of abuse diminishes, watch as communities emerge from beneath capital, like the stars coming out after the lights are finally shut off.

Special thanks to Mordecai Ettinger for the tutelage on the neurobiology of oppression.

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become exhausted spend too much time in the presence of other people. An entire community had rallied, one by one, in their own ways, to show me that rape was supposed to happen to me.

In her writings on war, Judith Butler explains that English-speakers have invented rhetorical devices like "War Zone" to make it seem okay when a bystander dies in an armed conflict. We tell ourselves, "That's what you get for living in a War Zone." This rhetoric lets us normalize the catastrophe that is war.

I believe we also have created a nasty rhetoric of Rape Zones, which is a social space in which (some people) believe it is okay to touch someone without their consent.

After my rape, I learned where everyone in my community had laid the borders of their concept of the Rape Zone, based on the questions they asked me as they attempted to assign blame.

Some people believe being friendly to someone birth-gendered differently than you makes you zoned for rape. Others will tell you drinking alcohol or attending music festivals zones you for rape. I've spoken with people who believe that when a woman gets married, she is now zoned for rape by her husband.

It is the subjectivity of it all, the way the borders of a Rape Zone expand and contract depending on who you are talking to, that make it all so terrifying.

I am terrified for certain bright-eyed young women in my life—women who, when I see them, the first thought that pops into my head is "looks like she hasn't been raped yet." And I realize I am thinking this because, according to some people, acting friendly and loving in public makes you zoned for rape. I am terrified for these women—sometimes at political and social gatherings, I spot creepers lurking around them. That is when I make my presence known, and flash my hate-filled eyes at the lurker. And then the adrenaline release, and the urge to kill.

Perhaps the desire to escape these socially constructed "rape zones" is why we've seen the rise of "sexually sterile zones"—suburbs and artificial communities marketed in such a way that it seems rape could never happen there. But anyone with their eyes open in the burbs will tell you otherwise.

After spending my teen years in the East Seattle sprawl, I've come to think of the suburbs as "Rapetopia," because I knew so many kids in their perfect-looking middle-class suburban families who got raped or assaulted by their dads, neighbors, church deacons, grandfathers, bosses. Of the dozen

simply insane. But in the years since it happened, another possibility has lodged itself in my mind: perhaps he did not know he was raping me. Perhaps he was interacting with symbols in his head, rather than checking in with me so I could communicate what I actually wanted.

This is a chilling thought, but I've come to believe that many of the worst abuses are rooted in a failure to communicate.

"I was raped quite badly in my teens," a sex worker friend recently told me over tea. "First by a stranger, then by the friend I went to for support."

"How have you kept your sanity?" I asked.

"The sex work really helps," my friend said cheerfully. "Personally, I think sex work may be the key to ending sexual violence."

She explains that in her work, she sets her boundaries upfront, and she is paid beforehand and can walk away from a client if she no longer feels comfortable. Intimacy is no longer an ambiguous space for her, but a clearly communicated transaction between an empowered businesswoman and a client.

As she speaks, I wonder if this is the shadow of the future—a future in which the circumference of the market is everywhere, and ambiguity is not to be found. A future in which children are educated to be business-owners of their own body-commodity.

Perhaps this is the role trauma plays in what Marx calls "primitive accumulation"—the fencing off of the commons, the moment of taking things that were once free and turning them into commodities, creating a society where people must sell their labor to buy things that were once free.

This is capital's cruel bargain: As sex flees rape, it is metamorphosed into exchange. In a world ruled by capital, where else does it have to go?

"Capital is coercion," I say to the group of young men. I'm visiting a permaculture farm in Oakland, a group of male permies in their early twenties has gathered around me. This place is known for sexual harassment, and I've been quick to route the conversation towards economic theory. I begin to perform a reverse magic trick that a Marxist once taught me:

"Would you rip up this \$20 bill?" I say, passing around a Jackson twenty. "Feel the weight of it. It's not like ordinary paper. It's been blessed as capital."

I take the bill back and hold it up, "What is this?"

"It's people!" a young man ventures.

"Right!" I say. "This is congealed human labor! With this, I can force someone who

rapist, though I've n d circles inside myself trying. The emotional pain seems to be stuck in my body. It could have been released with the help of my friends, but they weren't ready.

Not long after he raped me, my rapist became general manager of the volunteer theatre group. I later learned that several other women were raped by him during his ascent. All of us left after being raped—it is insanity to be in the presence of your abuser—especially when you both know they can do it again anytime they want.

What has been mindboggling is the prevalence of this pattern as I have moved on to organizations and projects. So many spaces are held by a league of abusers and their apologists. As I move through the Bay talking about my projects, I inevitably meet the victims and their friends. I am losing my trust for cis-men in power. Everytime I meet a charismatic, forceful man in charge of something, I immediately wonder how many women aren't in the room because of him.

Why do I want to kill rapists? That much should be obvious by now.

Why do I bother to hope? That's the bigger question.

Anarchy is self-control. Before I was an anarchist, I saw these words carved into the cement near my home in NW Portland.

Anarchy is self-control. These words were a glimmer of hope that stayed with me, and after a partner's job led me to move with him to the Bay Area, I found myself seeking out Anarchists, joining the Slingshot collective, moving into cooperative housing.

Gradually, I've come to realize that *Anarchy is not just self-control.*

Three years ago, I spent some time at Hellarity House. It was my first experience of a radical open-door squat governed by anarchist consensus process. At my first house meeting, I saw an amazing thing: a traveler was asked to leave—without malice or punishment—because he had touched someone without their consent. Over the next few weeks, this happened several more times. There were never tribunals questioning either party, or moments of forcing the target to "provide evidence" (consent violation, by definition, can *only* be expressed as the word of one person against another anyway). Watching this process, I saw the women in the house becoming stronger, more outspoken. I felt stronger. Even though the space was filled with rowdiness, arguments, and all sorts of spontaneity and danger, I felt drawn there because I knew that if I asked someone to back off, they'd respect me. A few years later, I found myself at the Sudo Room hackerspace, and similarly witnessed a consent violator being asked to leave. There was no malice—this wasn't a

Special thanks to Mordecai Ettinger for the tutelage on the neurobiology of oppression.

So far, no formal decision has been made. No one wants to deal with it until we have to. Banning accused rapists is seen as a distraction from the real reasons we are here. And it can be, especially when it devolves into a "rape tribunal" lasting weeks or months in which people are driven away from boredom or by triggers.

While my friends struggle with the dilemma of whether or not to bar him from our space, I am faced with a rather different problem: I am grappling with the desire to kill him.

The sky is filled with rape, you know. The Greeks and the Renaissance astronomers painted the stars with abuse, naming so many of them after victims and their rapists.

As the lone literature student at astronomy club, I always looked forward to hearing the physics students raise their voices, clearing away these ghosts, explaining the simple, yet powerful laws that actually govern the glowing blobs of matter that populate our sky.

When I was seven, my head was torn open in a car accident, and after the experience of having my body repaired and processed at a hospital, I was suddenly home again, with a face full of stitches. The problem was: I couldn't feel at home anymore. I had fallen into a sort of Trauma Place. A place where time changes. The present dilates, the future is obscured. Catastrophe seems to lurk in every shadow.

Humans have deeply social nervous systems. The vagus nerve runs from the base of our brains to the seat of our gut, and it is stimulated by social interaction. When volcanoes blow, seas rise, or cars smash into us, we are confronted with the anti-social nature of our random universe, and this can actually freeze up the vagus nerve and other connected nerves and organs, impeding everything from our ability to learn and feel emotions, to our digestion and tissue repair.

Luckily, after the injury, a parade of my favorite people came to visit me. They gasped when they saw my stitches, and wanted to hear the tale of how I survived. This showed me that I mattered. Even though the universe is a chaotic, uncaring place, people are able to create bubbles of intention and care within that chaos. Bubbles of community. And sure, communities can't guarantee your safety, but if you are hurt they will help pull your consciousness back from that place of chaos. Engaged by my community, I began to feel at home again, and I could approach the future again with curiosity and joy.

My senior year in college, I was raped by someone in a theatre community that I'd

become exhausted if I spend too much time in the presence of other people. An entire community had rallied, one by one, in their own ways, to show me that rape was supposed to happen to me.

In her writings on war, Judith Butler explains that English-speakers have invented rhetorical devices like "War Zone" to make it seem okay when a bystander dies in an armed conflict. We tell ourselves, "That's what you get for living in a War Zone." This rhetoric lets us normalize the catastrophe that is war.

I believe we also have created a nasty rhetoric of Rape Zones, which is a social space in which (some people) believe it is okay to touch someone without their consent.

After my rape, I learned where everyone in my community had laid the borders of their concept of the Rape Zone, based on the questions they asked me as they attempted to assign blame.

Some people believe being friendly to someone birth-gendered differently than you makes you zoned for rape. Others will tell you drinking alcohol or attending music festivals zones you for rape. I've spoken with people who believe that when a woman gets married, she is now zoned for rape by her husband.

It is the subjectivity of it all, the way the borders of a Rape Zone expand and contract depending on who you are talking to, that make it all so terrifying.

I am terrified for certain bright-eyed young women in my life—women who, when I see them, the first thought that pops into my head is "looks like she hasn't been raped yet." And I realize I am thinking this because, according to some people, acting friendly and loving in public makes you zoned for rape. I am terrified for these women—sometimes at political and social gatherings, I spot creepers lurking around them. That is when I make my presence known, and flash my hate-filled eyes at the lurker. And then the adrenaline release, and the urge to kill.

Perhaps the desire to escape these socially constructed "rape zones" is why we've seen the rise of "sexually sterile zones"—suburbs and artificial communities marketed in such a way that it seems rape could never happen there. But anyone with their eyes open in the burbs will tell you otherwise.

After spending my teen years in the East Seattle sprawl, I've come to think of the suburbs as "Rapetopia," because I knew so many kids in their perfect-looking middle-class suburban families who got raped or assaulted by their dads, neighbors, church deacons, grandfathers, bosses. Of the dozen

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RISE UP, SPEAK OUT, FIGHT BACK!

Continued from Page 1

accommodation is part of the relationship experience. No matter how long folks have been in a relationship, or how positive an experience it has been, under no circumstances are their bodies each other's property.

If you see this gross expectation in someone's actions or language, you can take that opportunity to educate that person, or point them in the direction of an awesome zine (like Cindy Crabb's Learning Good Consent Zine or Support Zine), if you feel comfortable

SPEAK OUT!



doing so. We need to fight back against the co-worker/peer/acquaintance/friend whose daily interactions clearly show their disregard for other's boundaries. "Sexual Harassment" workshops in the workplace and in schools are not enough. Folks who are sexually harassing others and not respecting their spaces need to promptly and earnestly check themselves, or folks with privilege who witness these acts need to call them out! Calling someone out may look like a holding a forum for community discussion, telling the aggressor what is on your mind in a confrontational way, giving them a rad zine on boundaries, also forms of

RISE UP!

We need to fight back against anyone who attempts to invalidate and negate another's experience of sexual assault. If someone says they have been sexually assaulted, they have been sexually assaulted—only they can name their experience and no one else. If you hear someone negating or minimizing the experience of sexual assault, it is totally appropriate (if you feel comfortable) to call them out. As aforementioned, community discussions, offering educational resources, individually confronting their ignorance, or engaging in forms of direct action, can all be tools in effectively calling someone on their bullshit.

We need to fight back against an education that teaches people how to avoid rape rather than teaching others not to rape. It is ineffective and victim-blaming to teach people that they need to carry whistles and pepper spray, and that they should not wear certain clothing. When society asserts that attitudes of fear and oppression will lead to safety, it invalidates a survivor's experience AND does not hold aggressors accountable. This type of "safety" education is unacceptable and cries out for reform. It would be awesome if consent workshops could be regularly held in community spaces and in schools. These consent workshops could focus on offering tools to explore and talk about boundaries, and on educating people about rape culture and how to resist the manifestations against this cultural norm!

Speak out:

We need to speak out against the myth of stranger danger. 2/3 of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the survivors, not an anonymous stranger hiding in the bushes. Someone can be sexually assaulted

question their oppressive assumptions. We need to speak out against slut shaming and victim blaming. No matter the multitude of sexual encounters someones experiences, each one deserves to be consensual. Also, folks should wear what the fuck they want and go where the fuck they want—sexual assault is never the survivor's fault, no one is ever "asking for it". There is NO behavior or appearance that conveys a desire to be violated.

We need to speak out against imposed gender roles and their intersection with sexual violence.

No sex assignment is indicative of sexual expectations and obligations. Alongside this concept, it's important to combat the myth that men do not experience sexual violence. Men of all ages can experience sexual violence and it is asinine and invalidating that sexual violence has been labeled as strictly a "women's issue."

"There is NO behavior or experience that conveys a desire to be violated."



"No sex assignment is indicative of sexual expectations and obligations."

Rise up:

We need to rise up and form community support groups. These can look like safe spaces where boundaries experiences

stronger community, sheds light on the prevalence of sexual violence, and can be powerfully validating for a survivor. Explore spaces in your community that you can reserve for a day! Invite members of the community to create and attend consent workshops, or facilitate a community discussion about sexual violence and survivorship. A note of caution, sometimes it is helpful to conceal the location of the event until someone contacts you with an interest to attend, it is ultimately important to work towards creating a safe space for this event

We need to rise up and get together to discuss what community perpetrator accountability looks like. There are a million reasons why a survivor may not want to get the cops involved in their experience. Unfortunately, there is not enough discussion of what aggressor accountability looks like as an alternative to law enforcement. Restorative justice, which focuses on the needs of the survivor and their community instead of satisfying punitive avenues of "justice", is not a common enough word in the current paradigm of aggressor accountability. Organize community forums to discuss what aggressor accountability and restoration looks like in your community! Our current culture uses patriarchal tools of oppression to condone sexual violence. Destroy what destroys you.



If you see this gross expectation in someone's actions or language, you can take that opportunity to educate that person, or point them in the direction of an awesome zine (like Cindy Crabb's Learning Good Consent Zine or Support Zine), if you feel comfortable

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We need to speak out against the myth of stranger danger. 2/3 of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the survivors, not an anonymous stranger hiding in the bushes. Someone can be sexually assaulted by their friend, acquaintance, or their partner.

It is time that this reality is asserted into community consciousness, and that people

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"No sex assignment is indicative of sexual expectations and obligations."

Rise up:

We need to rise up and form community support groups. These can look like safe spaces where boundaries, experiences, education, and healing are discussed. Holding a space of support and validation creates a

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SIEGE THE SECOND

by Kyle Merritt

Ludowitz

Bassam Abadi survived the military siege and bombing campaigns of his home city of Aleppo, Syria for three years. Yet after finally escaping and illegally smuggling himself to

Syrian refugees living in Turkey also face the barriers of navigating a country with a wholly unfamiliar language and culture. Once outside the Arabic-speaking border

Garip Batur, a Turkish bus driver from the city of Gaziantep expresses as we sit in the lounge of a transit depot. "Unemployment is already a large problem here in Turkey, and Syrian people are taking jobs away from Turkish citizens. Arabs don't bother to learn Turkish,

can't afford to be a refugee. Everything is so expensive here [in Turkey] and all my savings were used in the first month. I can't afford to live as a refugee in this country anymore. I have to go back now and live with the bombs." Another long silence takes hold as the border fence grows closer. Staring out of the window, he shakes his head in defeat, muttering almost

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Bassam Abadi survived the military siege and bombing campaigns of his home city of Aleppo, Syria for three years. Yet after finally escaping and illegally smuggling himself to safety in neighboring Turkey, Bassam began experiencing the severe hardships of living as a refugee in a foreign country without housing, employment, or a familiar language—a desperate situation known by many Syrian refugees as 'the Second Siege'. Now, after a full year of scraping by in Turkey, the difficulties of being a refugee are driving Bassam to return home, where he will opt to live in the midst of the civil war rather than continue to struggle to make a new life for himself in an unfamiliar land.

Unlike the military siege occurring within Syria, the Second Siege is not an assault of artillery and airstrikes, but of culture and economics. The past four years of civil war have devastated the value of Syria's currency, at a time when the Turkish economy has seen a steady rise in its national industries. This rapidly expanding gap in currency values adds an almost insurmountable level of difficulty for Syrian refugees trying to adapt to a new life outside their own country. A Syrian family's weekly budget for food and public transportation before the civil war can easily be spent in a day or two when living in Turkey, due to the widening exchange rate between the two nations. This weakened purchasing power forces families to choose between rent or food, between medicines or clothing, or between school supplies for the children or bus fare for a father to look for employment or to travel to work.

Syrian refugees living in Turkey also face the barriers of navigating a country with a wholly unfamiliar language and culture. Once outside the Arabic-speaking border communities, Syrian refugees generally find themselves unable to communicate with local Turks. This language barrier can make critical tasks such as finding employment, asking for directions, or seeking medical assistance acutely difficult, encouraging Syrian refugees to clump together with other Arabic speakers in overcrowded, economically depressed neighborhoods. These desperate living conditions and lack of assimilation in turn exacerbate existing Turkish animosity toward Arabs, dating back to historical resentments over Arab complicity in the fall of the Ottoman Empire. This anti-Arab hostility has only intensified as the Syrian civil war grinds on and

"I can't afford to live as a refugee in this country anymore. I have to go back now and live with the bombs."

more and more Arab refugees are permanently settling in Turkey.

"[The Syrian refugees] come to Turkey illegally and take our jobs for a lower wage,"

Garip Batur, a Turkish bus driver from the city of Gaziantep expresses as we sit in the lounge of a transit depot. "Unemployment is already a large problem here in Turkey, and Syrian people are taking jobs away from Turkish citizens. Arabs don't bother to learn Turkish, and they open shops with only Arabic writing. Housing prices and rents have doubled or tripled in the area because there are so many Syrian people arriving, and even then, families sleep on the ground in our parks because there are too many of them. Turkish culture is being replaced by a more conservative Arabic culture. How can young Turkish people manage to make a life with these problems? Arabs are changing everything here and I don't feel safe in my own city anymore."

Under such devastating economic challenges and with so much animosity from the Turkish populace, many Syrians surpass their own personal limits and can no longer bear to live as displaced refugees in an unfamiliar and unwelcoming society. The return to Syria—the return to life in a war zone—is one of the only remaining options open to them.

"What am I going to do now?" Bassam exclaims, unable to suppress his desperation any longer. "How can I go back to Syria and try to live in war? But I have no other option. I

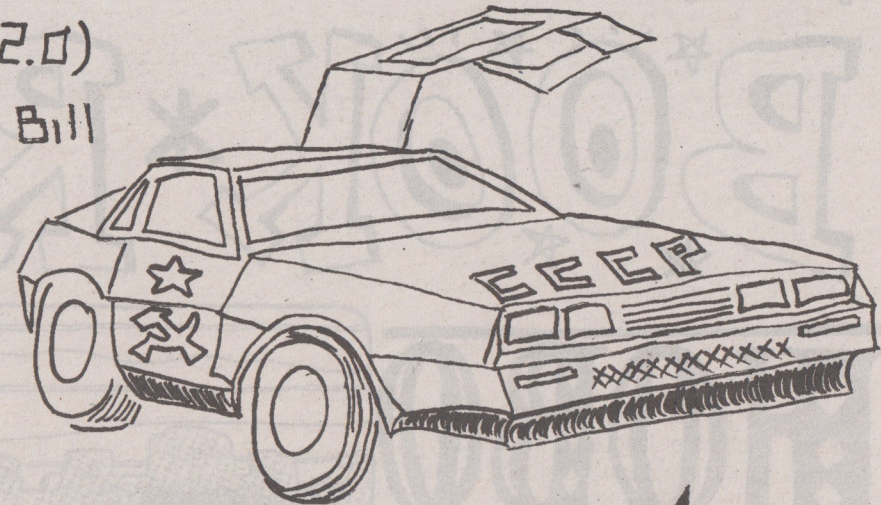
can't afford to be a refugee. Everything is so expensive here [in Turkey] and all my savings were used in the first month. I can't afford to live as a refugee in this country anymore. I have to go back now and live with the bombs." Another long silence takes hold as the border fence grows closer. Staring out of the window, he shakes his head in defeat, muttering almost under his breath. "This isn't fair. This isn't right. What am I going to do?" Finally the bus comes to a halt, and the doors draw open. Disembarking, Bassam and his fellow refugees begin walking through the barred, metal gates that will usher them across the border and back to their home country—back to a life amidst what may well be the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

It is unclear what will happen to Bassam and the others like him who have given up on building a new life and are returning home to Syria. Some will likely be killed by the bombings, while others may starve to death. Those who make it through the war will be witnesses to the horrors of combat, the destruction of their country, and the mass slaughter of their neighbors and countrymen. There was a moment of hope for these civilians—a chance to start a new, safer life in Turkey—but that moment is gone for them now. For countless Syrians who once fled to Turkey hoping for a better future, the burdens of the Second Siege have simply proven too great to bear.



BACK TO THE FUTURE

(socialism 2.0)
by Bill



What will health care become once Capital is buried 60 feet under in North America and across the planet? Its demise will spell the end of:

- the private pharmaceutical industry and stranglehold of corporate Big Pharma interests and structures
- private medical insurers, the whole shebang
- the privately-owned industries for high-cost medical equipment
- fee-gouging practices by countless physicians in the name of profit over people
- the network of costly, profit-oriented private clinics and hospitals

Their disappearance will open up radically new vistas on health care provision and preventive medicine as an inherent *public good*.

My article, grounded on many years of direct experience in provincial post-communist Bulgaria, asks if past paradigmatic experiments that strove over decades to create socialized medicine are useful historical experiments worth looking at and possibly learning from?

I wish to argue that we need to revisit the various experiments in universal health care in the socialist states of Eastern Europe. Those experiments now lie largely dismantled, demonized by the neoliberal corporate and political (dis)order that has descended on much of the former Eastern Bloc. My guiding thesis: in moving toward 'socialism 2.0,' the international left needs to look unblinkered at redeemable past *real-socialist* achievements in medicine, housing, guaranteed full employment, people's education, salvaging and retrofitting what seems viable. This essay explores one such 'experiment in people's

We need to ask what that system of medical social welfare actually was, how it was experienced, what it accomplished, as revealed by people's oral history: building an oral history of socialist medicine as it was experienced and remains reflected in the memory of real people, its living subjects. What can we learn from its past for the project of a new more libertarian 'socialism 2.0' in our own century? What were its shortcomings and failings, as a system within a one-party authoritarian communist state operating under the myriad constraints of the Cold War? But exploring that requires an open mind among socialists, ready to rethink long-held shibboleths—beyond all the distortions of Cold War perceptions in North America, and on the North American left, unfortunately still operative down to the present day.

In *real-socialist* Bulgaria, medical care was universal and cost-free, including hospitalization and surgical procedures. Waiting periods for admission to hospital were kept to a minimum. Citizens did not pay for state 'insurance' coverage; rather, it was offered to all adults and children as a state benefit.

"Patients were charged nothing for hospital stays and various procedures, or for medication."

This fact was closely intertwined with a core

like water, steam heat and electricity, or public transport) were clearly in effect. Prices were also uniform everywhere, and generally quite stable over long periods. Low-cost restaurants, nearly cost-free workplace canteens and vacation resorts were also once the familiar and welcome norm.

Doctors and dentists were assigned to all schools, factories, and agricultural collectives, as well as to set hours at clinics and in hospital. What this meant at a school, for example, is that children were regularly checked for general health and dental health, by an in-school medical practitioner. This system of preventive medical care was, in common memory, deemed quite exemplary: it led to an excellent standard in oral hygiene, promoted in and by the school. Doctors' physical exams on the spot at school made sure kids were healthy, and not overweight. Physicians assigned to factories were available for any accident on the spot, and also ensured regular check-ups for workers. Doctors and nurses were also available at cost-free summer camps, which were very widespread as a means to educate children and youth and provide out-of-school recreation and training.

Patients could in addition go to any doctor of their choice, including a specialist. People narrate that care in hospital was in their memory excellent, as was food for patients. Patients were charged nothing for hospital stays and various procedures, or for



particularly virulent and barbaric in Bulgaria. Today its population, economy, and levels of morale are in massive contraction under unfettered Capital's 'shock therapy.' It is now the lowest-income post-socialist state, with the highest levels of economic emigration in Europe.

The once paradigmatic Bulgarian system of people's health care lies largely in ruins, its restructured remnant seriously underfunded. The changes are striking. Many Bulgarians remain reluctant or simply unable to pay the current monthly fee for obligatory state health insurance (about the equivalent of \$11), and so nearly 20 percent now are not legally insured. Nonetheless, hospitals now account for a third of all public debt in capitalist Bulgaria.

The contrast between 'then' and 'now' is stark and for many Bulgarians truly

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Bulgaria's socialist experiment and grounded experience of universal socialist health care may have been the most positive of any of the various (and quite different) states inside what was called the Warsaw Pact. I have become ever more convinced, mainly by living long-term among Bulgarians of a generation born circa 1974 and earlier, that what Bulgaria achieved before the catastrophe of 1989-90 and the demise of its socialist system—it did *not* self-destruct—was indeed exemplary and is worth looking at and learning from. My own long-standing ties to social-anarchist

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"Patients were charged nothing for hospital stays and various procedures, or for medication."

This fact was closely intertwined with a core aspect of the socialist economy: guaranteed full employment. Bulgarians in interview speak about "three people doing the job of one," in effect a form of *real-socialist* job-sharing, all with a guaranteed livable egalitarian wage. Citizens with a primary school education (or less) were also *all* employed—as factory hands, toilet attendants, in agriculture, street cleaners and other simple jobs, all at a livable egalitarian wage. This was in effect a socialist UBI or 'unconditional basic income' for one and all, but tied to actually having an assigned job of some kind. Not to accept a job was viewed as a misdemeanor, in effect a crime not to work. The state enforced full labor, it was policed. Since there was 'full employment,' with the state as universal employer, it had no need to levy a special added monthly or annual fee for medical coverage (as exists today).



Doctors and dentists were assigned to all schools, factories, and agricultural collectives, as well as to set hours at clinics and in hospital. What this meant at a school, for example, is that children were regularly checked for general health and dental health, by an in-school medical practitioner. This system of preventive medical care was, in common memory, deemed quite exemplary: it led to an excellent standard in oral hygiene, promoted in and by the school. Doctors' physical exams on the spot at school made sure kids were healthy, and not overweight. Physicians assigned to factories were available for any accident on the spot, and also ensured regular check-ups for workers. Doctors and nurses were also available at cost-free summer camps, which were very widespread as a means to educate children and youth and provide out-of-school recreation and training.

Patients could in addition go to any doctor of their choice, including a specialist. People narrate that care in hospital was in their memory excellent, as was food for patients. Patients were charged nothing for hospital stays and various procedures, or for medications. The ratio of hospital beds to population was high. Technology for accurate diagnosis and treatment was of a relatively high standard, given the constraints of the Cold War and the country's relatively small size (peaking at approximately 9 million in 1988).

Importantly, pharmacies were all state-owned. The pharmaceuticals, from state-owned Bulgarian manufacturers and imported largely from other socialist economies, were, in people's memory, of high quality and quite inexpensive. Only a non-profit pharmaceutical manufacturing industry could ensure the functioning of such a system. Nor was there advertising of such products. There was no perceived need.

In socialist Bulgaria, from the 1950s, there was a widespread network of rural primary care clinics, staffed by doctors and nurses and paramedics assigned to such posts. This helped significantly to overcome the inevitable differences in the geography of access to medical care, urban vs. rural.

After the collapse of socialism, the 'class war from above' under the naked rule of Capitalism resurrected in the former socialist states of East-Central and Eastern Europe, a 'new periphery' of global Capital, in some ways a

particularly virulent and barbaric in Bulgaria. Today its population, economy, and levels of morale are in massive contraction under unfettered Capital's 'shock therapy.' It is now the lowest-income post-socialist state, with the highest levels of economic emigration in Europe.

The once paradigmatic Bulgarian system of people's health care lies largely in ruins, its restructured remnant seriously underfunded. The changes are striking. Many Bulgarians remain reluctant or simply unable to pay the current monthly fee for obligatory state health insurance (about the equivalent of \$11), and so nearly 20 percent now are not legally insured. Nonetheless, hospitals now account for a third of all public debt in capitalist Bulgaria.

The contrast between 'then' and 'now' is stark and for many Bulgarians truly overwhelming, even devastating for the most impoverished, a large segment of the pensioned senior citizenry, and nearly all of the Roma ethnic underclass, the most severely afflicted victims in the reborn free-market economy. Once nearly all Roma were gainfully employed, despite the endemic racism against them; today Roma joblessness, in part due to the same now more virulent racism, is in the range of 85-90 percent; many Roma have emigrated westward in order to survive.

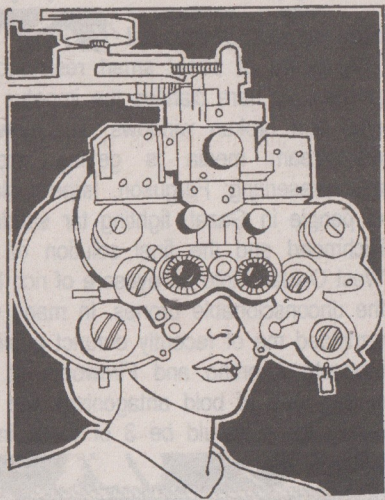
"...hospitals now account for a third of public debt in capitalist Bulgaria."

What then can we learn from the experiments in a now gutted people's Bulgaria? Can some of *real-socialist* health care be retrofitted for tomorrow? Is a less centralized, more locally-controlled socialist commonwealth possible? How a far more 'self-determining' yet sustainable communist society could be vibrantly constructed from the 'bottom up,' based more on autonomous production units, remains an open question. Perhaps one key





Bulgaria's socialist experiment and grounded experience of universal socialist health care may have been the most positive of any of the various (and quite different) states inside what was called the Warsaw Pact. I have become ever more convinced, mainly by living long-term among Bulgarians of a generation born circa 1974 and earlier, that what Bulgaria achieved before the catastrophe of 1989-90 and the demise of its socialist system—it did *not* self-destruct—was indeed exemplary and is worth looking at and learning from. My own long-standing ties to social-anarchist imaginaries have been reshaped by repeated discussion with Bulgarians who are certain their own lives in the People's Republic (1944-1990) were far more happy and ordered, materially and socially, then than now, and radical equality was a central value.



about three people doing the job of one, in effect a form of *real*-socialist job-sharing, all with a guaranteed livable egalitarian wage. Citizens with a primary school education (or less) were also *all* employed—as factory hands, toilet attendants, in agriculture, street cleaners and other simple jobs, all at a livable egalitarian wage. This was in effect a socialist UBI or 'unconditional basic income' for one and all, but tied to actually having an assigned job of some kind. Not to accept a job was viewed as a misdemeanor, in effect a crime not to work. The state enforced full labor, it was policed. Since there was 'full employment,' with the state as universal employer, it had no need to levy a special added monthly or annual fee for medical coverage (as exists today).



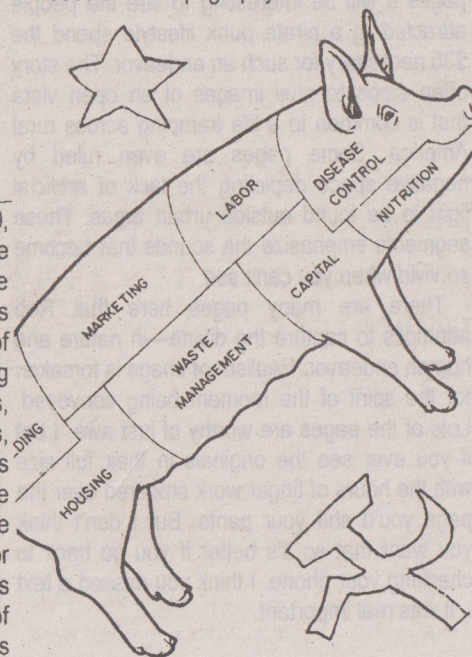
Virtually everyone over the age of 19 or 20, including many married women, had some assigned job. All doctors also worked for the state, there was no private practice, it was basically prohibited. The egalitarian system of incomes ensured that wage differentials among most workers—from professors, factory heads, doctors, lawyers, writers, artists, actors, railroad workers, to office personnel, sales personnel, street cleaners, you name it—were relatively minor. In their narratives, people recount that wages were quite adequate for most needs since costs of many essentials were kept at a minimum, and some aspects of virtual 'demonetization' (for example, of utilities

standard, given the constraints of the Cold War and the country's relatively small size (peaking at approximately 9 million in 1988).

Importantly, pharmacies were all state-owned. The pharmaceuticals, from state-owned Bulgarian manufacturers and imported largely from other socialist economies, were, in people's memory, of high quality and quite inexpensive. Only a non-profit pharmaceutical manufacturing industry could ensure the functioning of such a system. Nor was there advertising of such products. There was no perceived need.

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In all such visions of a post-capitalist future, egalitarian, cost-free, sustainable health care as a *public good* is a central challenge. So a working sub-thesis here might suggest: social-anarchist and *real*-socialist vision and practice can learn much from each other in a mutually fruitful if *dialectical* bond. That is a rare proposition, but we live in singular critical times.

BOOK * REVIEWS

HOBBO FIRES

by Robert Earl Sutter III

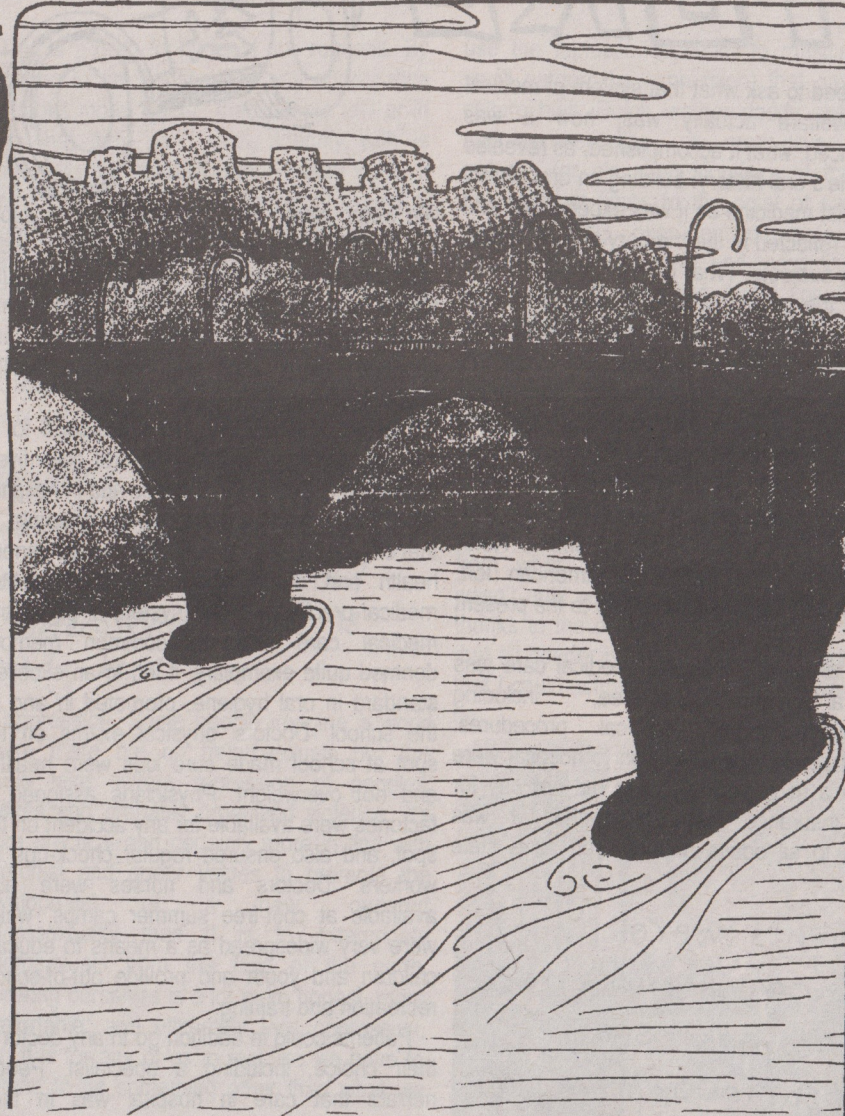
3332 18th Ave. South Apt#1 Minneapolis, MN 55407

RobertEarlSutterIII.com 336 pages Retail \$30

Review by Egg-Nog-shush!

Shit — people get old. Rob Noxious is now Robert Earl Sutter...the III. At least his life as an anarchist artist hasn't matured into as stuffy confines as the name has. Expanded and gotten deeper it has, rich with moods, idealism and friendship. It is a life that sips at the narcotic freedom to be found just outside of society's cage.

There is a lot going on here to be encapsulated — if it could be a pill I'd suggest you'd grab something to wash it down. I'm going to cheese dick this review. This new graphic novel was sent a couple months ago to our collective and no one read it. When I noticed it wasn't handled I started to entreat the well intentioned usual gang of volunteers loitering around our car wreck of a project to review it. I was given as much acknowledgment as a Green Party Voters guide at an anarchist book fair. So in an effort not to give similar treatment to old Rob I found a spot under a tree and read about half of the book.



Even if not all aspects of the narrative grabbed me, I did find it important that someone is thinking ahead. When so many

RACE, & OTHER LIES BUSTING MYTHS

by Augustin

University of California Press,

2012, 220 pgs.

Reviewed by Dym Squirrel

Some books are so near-comically ambitious that they invariably provoke either knee-jerk ridicule or messianic hopefulness, with precious little in between. The expansively tiled *Race, Monogamy, and Other Lies They Told You: Busting Myths About Human Nature*, runs that risk, but I hope it will be read with guarded optimism.

In my opinion, Mr. Fuentes doesn't quite "bust" the myths he addresses, but he still does a helluva job deflating them, giving readers some solid ammunition in the battles over what "human nature" is (if anything) and the consequences of those battles on society. This book has two parts: first, a 3 chapter "Myth-Busting toolkit," "Myths About Aggression," and "Myths About Sex." While all are interesting, I found the "Myths About Aggression" the most valuable from an anarchist perspective, since evidence that humans are not inherently vicious or greedy really strikes at the heart of justifications for hierarchical power and society's infatuation with coercive control. Without espousing anarchism himself, Mr.



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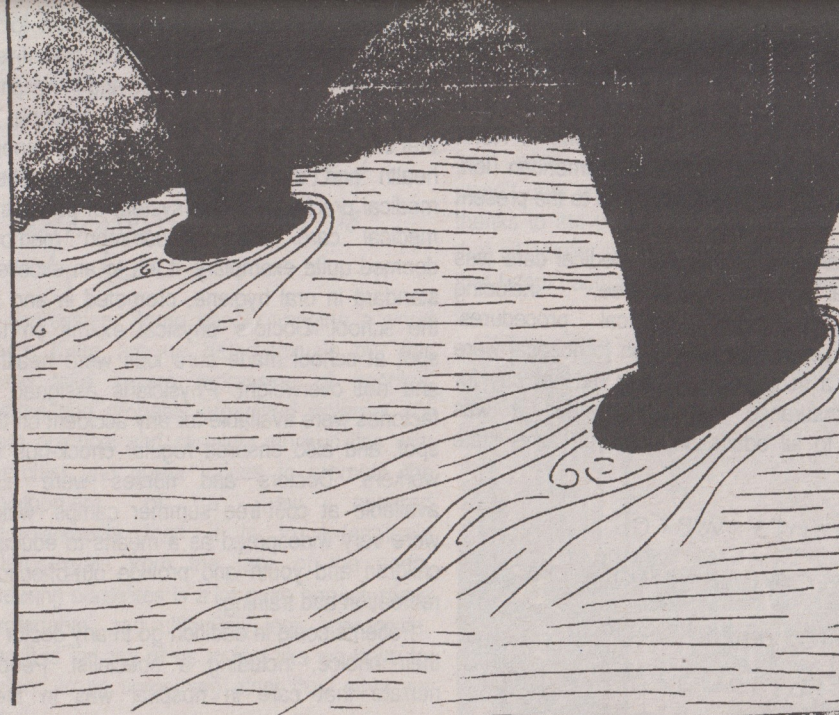
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For those who don't know Rob he chronicles the things dear to him in comic book form. Living on the fringes of mainstream society by train hopping, squatting, playing DIY/punk music, pursuing Queer love and other advancements of living in current radical life. This recent comic does that but the twist is that it is set in the future — where people use technology to get the low down on what train to ride, where robots patrol no man's land and activists make islands from recycled plastic bottles. There's enough familiar things going on to capture you in the present age. Chance romantic encounters, people sharing music and drink, conversations speculating on reality, observations of nature ruling supreme. Oogles. The sci-fi part of it didn't grab me and shake me until I picked it up recently and finished reading the story. The most impressive feat to



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The Stowaways ★

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There is a lot to be found while on the journey — and that better future is really the present day radical community. People meeting each other and discovering their dimensions is a consistent throughout the drama. There are conversations I didn't catch onto like the philosophical and technical ramblings of science. It reflects the kinds of things people ponder when not leaded down by capitalism's distractions. Though I rushed reading through these segments I found them accurate to conversations I've had in this scene.

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There are many pages here that Rob attempt's to capture the divine—in nature and human endeavor. Realism of image is forsaken for the spirit of the moment being conveyed. Lots of the pages are worthy of just awe. I bet if you ever see the originals in their full size with the hours of finger work smeared over the page you'd shit your pants. But I don't think you want that so it's better if you go back to checking your phone. I think you missed a text — it was real important.



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The Stowaways ★ Summer 2014 Yorba Linda

5082 Wendover Rd. Yorba Linda CA 92886

A chronicle of the punk scene with emphasis on people activated by the DIY side of it. It has up till now been covering the dispersed LA area. In this issue the editor has relocated to the Humboldt area of Northern California — and surprise surprise, there is a healthy and vibrant scene to be found there. The amount of shows each issue records is impressive. A bit more elaboration on the bands' sound and message could further the cause here. Also what makes this kind of journalism alive is vivid descriptions of the characters that populate the shows—which Stowaways could use more of. The zine is starting to look sharper since its early issues with large photos to spark the imagination. Also to keep you seated is interviews and reviews all of it done with care.

Mission Mini-Comix "What is Net Neutrality?"

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★ EastWest August '14 An Anarchist Newspaper ★

Free eastwest@riseup.net

The record of street smart resistance. The perspective here clarifies the impetus behind riots and broken windows. The news your mainstream media is getting wrong or misrepresenting; Ferguson, Israel's slaughter of people in Gazat, fighting tar sands oil in Richmond and the final solution of turning West Oakland into an eyesore of rich lofts for the unconscionable drones. In many ways it reminded me of recently defunct publications Modesto Anarcho and Fireworks. It has a similar tone of bold antagonism and spunk. Really there should be 3 of these in every town.

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by Colin Ward &
David Goodway

Talking Anarchy

Review by Kathy Labriola

I rarely write book reviews, but this book got me so excited I just had to share my enthusiasm! This compact little PM Press book is essentially an extended conversation between two amazing British anarchist writers, editors, and activists. Weighing in at just 165 pages, it is jam-packed with anarchist history, events, and ideas, and is the one book I would give to anyone who wants to understand what anarchism is all about.

Colin Ward edited the anarchist journal "Freedom" and founded the journal "Anarchy" which he edited for decades. He was a tireless anarchist speaker and writer, eventually writing 30 books on the subject. David Goodway is a British social and cultural historian whose best-known book is "Anarchist Seeds Beneath the Snow." He had the opportunity to interview Colin Ward at length, over a period of months, just before Ward's death in 2010 at the age of 86. "Talking Anarchy" is the result of those interviews, published in the US earlier this year.

Despite being a card-carrying anarchist since 1968, I have successfully avoided reading Kropotkin, Bakunin, Read, Bookchin, and all the other anarchist heavyweights. I am embarrassed to confess that I always found them tedious, maddeningly abstract and irrelevant to present-day reality. Ward's take on anarchism is refreshingly practical and tied to our current challenges of creating meaningful work, affordable housing, useful and child-centric education and child-care, building meaningful community, and doing effective political organizing.

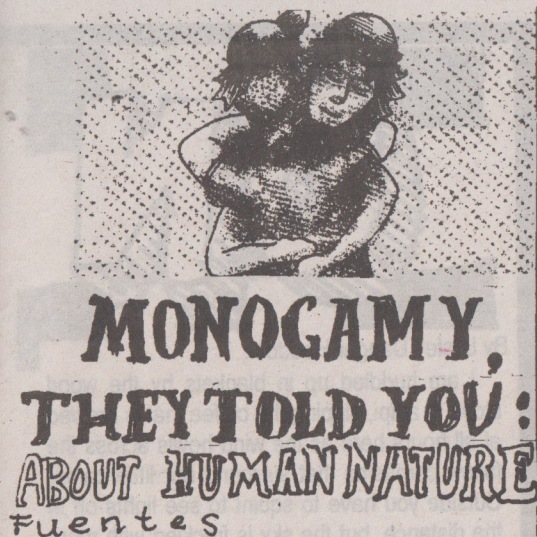
Ward emphasizes the importance of tenants taking control of their buildings, of students and parents organizing for more humane and relevant education, and for alternative forms of work such as worker co-ops and individuals working independently rather than for an employer. He sees all these as ways of living our anarchist beliefs by demonstrating that people can create the forms of organization that they need and can empower themselves to be in charge of their lives on as many fronts as possible without coercion or guidance from an authoritarian state. For instance, he talks about the importance of individuals and groups of people in cities growing as much of our own food as possible, providing for ourselves and being more food self-sufficient. All such self-help and mutual aid projects prove that anarchism works, that people at a individual and/or local level are competent to decide what our communities need, and then create our own ways to meet those needs. His approach seems very focused on putting anarchist practices into action to solve the life-threatening problems created by capitalism and imperialism. In another example, he says that squatting vacant buildings shows the irrational and barbaric nature of capitalism, a system that allows housing to sit vacant while people are

homeless and freezing in the streets, and that people can take action to house themselves.

Of particular interest to me, as a deranged militant feminist, are Ward and Goodway's discussion of the historical importance of anarchists, from Emma Goldman to Alex Comfort and many others, in challenging and successfully overturning the sexist and sex-negative attitudes and laws in Britain, in advocating for the right to birth control, abortion, sexual freedom, and equality for women. Ward reminds us that people today cannot even imagine the rigid and suffocating sexual repression, ignorance, and sex roles of compulsory heterosexual marriage that were the rule as recently as the early 1960's. They emphasize the dramatic changes that have occurred in a very short time, and the role that anarchists have played in fighting for equal rights for women and for sexual freedom for all. They both see the rights of each person to control their bodies, their sex lives, and their relationship choices as core anarchist values, because people are competent to create their own relationships, families, and communities without direction or restriction from the state. Ward talks extensively about the central role women have played in founding and sustaining anarchist organizations in the UK.

Ward quotes frequently throughout the book from many anarchist writers, some totally fascinating and exciting stuff! Some of the books he quotes are from the usual suspects, but many were from books and anarchists I had never even heard of.

Ironically, despite my aforementioned aversion to anarchist theory, by the time I finished the book, I had jotted down a long list of anarchist books that I intend to read!

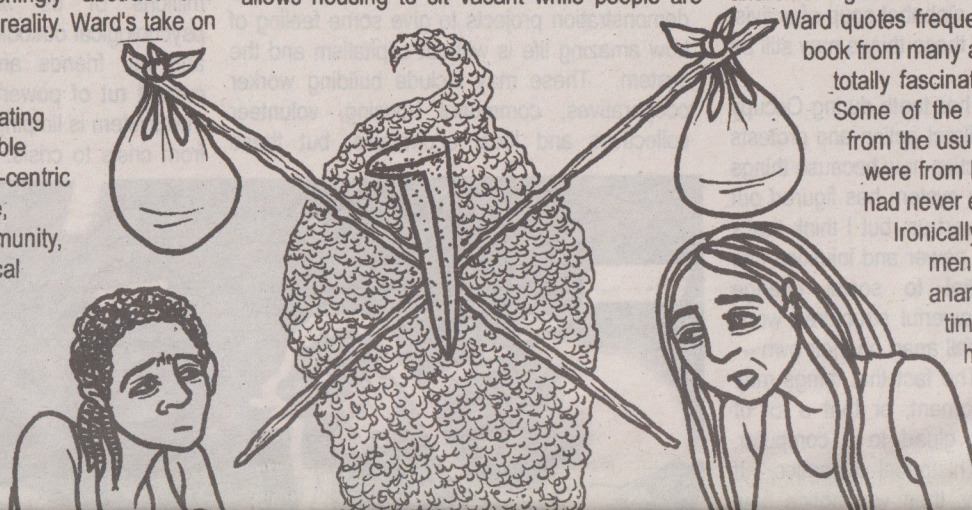


Fuentes' points go far in support of those of us who do. As for sex and "race," he largely attempts to disprove any significant, genetically based differences between the sexes and amongst what most people think of as "the races," and he succeeds about as well as one might hope.

1+1=* ... Alchemy, baby.

Ultimately, the highlight of this book is Mr. Fuentes' thorough, clear and accessible "Myth Busting Toolkit," which should probably be reviewed annually by both newbies and veterans of the nature/nurture debate alike. His "Naturenurture!" coining for how people actually develop is a valuable conceptual tool for avoiding binary thinking AND the fallacy that development is just the addition of "nature" and "nurture," like 1+1=2, helping us see how 1+1=* instead. Alchemy, baby.

My hardcover first printing contained a lot of small but annoying editorial errors, but hopefully those will be fixed in the softcover edition, and I'd still recommend it to anyone wanting to contribute to a free and equal society that cares more about people and truth than money and mythology.



REVIEWS

veterans of the nature/nurture debate alike. His "Naturenurture" coining for how people actually develop is a valuable conceptual tool for avoiding binary thinking AND the fallacy that development is just the addition of "nature" and "nurture," like $1 + 1 = 2$, helping us see how $1 + 1 = *$ instead. Alchemy, baby.

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and all the other anarchist heavyweights. I am embarrassed to confess that I always found them tedious, maddeningly abstract and irrelevant to present-day reality. Ward's take on anarchism is refreshingly practical and tied to our current challenges of creating meaningful work, affordable housing, useful and child-centric education and child-care, building meaningful community, and doing effective political organizing.

squatting vacant buildings shows the irrational and barbaric nature of capitalism, a system that allows housing to sit vacant while people are

ward talks extensively about the central role women have played in founding and sustaining anarchist organizations in the UK.

Ward quotes frequently throughout the book from many anarchist writers, some totally fascinating and exciting stuff! Some of the books he quotes are from the usual suspects, but many were from books and anarchists I had never even heard of.

Ironically, despite my aforementioned aversion to anarchist theory, by the time I finished the book, I had jotted down a long list of anarchist books that I intend to read!

REVIEWS

★ Hug It Out #1 ★

ppd: \$2 US, \$3 Canada/Mexico, \$4 World
PO Box 73691 Washington DC 20056

"WHAT THE FUCK?" was my first thought. "Wrestling??" Then peering into how it is made by the editor of the magazine Give Me Back who is also a very accomplished photo journalist only furthered the question mark above my head. Still a competent documentation of a subculture—one I hadn't taken seriously since I saw *They Live*. The writing is solid and the pages are laid out with care and style. This is an example of a fanzine being a little too excited about a cultural phenomenon over a facet of life often overlooked. As it should the excitement of wrestling in here is palpable.

New Hearts ★★★★★ ★★★★ New Bones #14

1037 South Broad St. Apt. D
Lancaster, OH 43130

Each issue is a visual journey of collages. The work is starting to depict a personal reflection of current events & issues. The imagery is

★ Peops #8.9 ★

PO Box 1013 Cooper St NY, NYC 100276
killerbanshee.com

Art and treasure hunting by the squatter punk Fly. She has the ability to unearth the most unique and brave people and get them to share a bit of their life story. Each page is a portrait with a brief bio to whet your interest. The portraits highlight punk, squatting, the lower East Side of NY and other facets of the counter culture. Essentially people who are making reality as opposed to being head locked by it. Like Peter Cramer of ABC No Rio & Aline Kominsky the underground comix artist. Fly's handiwork is controlled and manages to get an accurate likeness of the lunatic fringe in repose. This was a quick issue giving us peops a peek at issue 9 that will be out soon. Really there's enough here to keep you busy meeting some new faces. Who



Weapon: Mouth

adventures in the
free speech zone
by STONEY BURKE

(\$20 regentpress.net)

Review by Jesse D. Palmer

Back in the mid-1980s, before I worked on *Slingshot*, a lot of us UC Berkeley campus radical types would come out most days during lunch time and sit in a big circle to listen to Stoney Burke's hilarious political rants/performances. Stoney was a master at saying important things about injustice and the absurd contradictions of capitalism in a funny, engaging, accessible way. He wasn't just about entertainment—he was a part of the radical scene and he influenced my thinking and helped me articulate my criticisms of the

speaking in public places. Other chapters are odes to other street personalities he has known or other famous loudmouths. He goes through his experiences at decades of protests and historical events from the UC Berkeley anti-apartheid movement to the various Republi-cratic conventions to Occupy.

Laughing at the absurd capitalist/eco-destroying system might be one of our best tools to bring it down in flames.

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Each issue is a visual journey of collages. The work is starting to depict a personal reflection of current events & issues. The imagery is quite striking as it tackles factory farming, corporate media, persecution of whistle blowers, environmental destruction, drones, the seedy side of sports. I wish more people cared about the state of the world and did something—even something as simple as cutting up pictures. But beyond just regurgitating politics a real sense of mood and dream state is being created. Sometimes the pages here are hampered by the shitty copy machine used to duplicate them. The originals are often posted on the We Make Zines website. There the true splendor of the art jumps out to shake you.

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So I was excited to look at his new book. The book is organized around short chapters that are in part auto-biographical and many of which recall material from his rants. He also includes fliers, newspaper clippings and photographs. One of the early chapters about a formative incident from his childhood when racists shot into his parents' house and wrote "nigger lovers" on the sidewalk to punish them for holding integrated political meetings actually brought a tear to my eye. There's a lot about his many, many, many arrests for

adventures in the
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**Laughing at the absurd
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The title of the book is from a police report where the officer filled in "mouth" for the blank titled "weapon." Overall, what's impressive about Stoney is how his 35 years as a street performer exemplifies what a do-it-yourself life is really about. Stoney life is all about creating his own venues and opportunities to perform while the mainstream entertainment biz ignores him. He lives life on his own terms with few compromises, which is so hard to achieve. I hope this book will turn more people onto Stoney's amazing work. Laughing at the absurd capitalist/eco-destroying system might be one of our best tools to bring it down in flames.

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THE DARKNESS BEFORE THE RESIST INERTIA, EMBRACE COLLAPSE DAWN

Continued from Page 1

off our collective pessimism and see that the *kind of collapse* we're about to be part of is really up to us. Sure, if nothing happens soon industrial capitalism will run up against natural limitations, killing us and itself. But we're not dead *yet* — why the mournful sad faces when there's still time to fight back against the coal mines, the oil trains, the fracking, and the greed, shortsightedness and corporate and governmental structures that are killing the planet?

There's at least two ways we can choose collapse of the system over collapse of our ecological life support systems.

First, we can fight the system politically, economically and culturally — in the streets, in our communities, and in long-term and short-term ways. This is about more than fighting each new pipeline, or the huge 350.org rally in September, but that may be part of it. It is about more than fighting the 1%, the corporations, the WTO and the police, but that all may be part of it. It is about much more than the same old single issue politics, boring political meetings, and alphabet soup of activist groups, although all of these things may still be part of it.

An activist who cut her teeth during Occupy recently told me that direct action and protests were passé and ineffective now because things have changed and the system has figured out ways to co-opt and divert us, but I think that's wrong. Resistance to power and injustice has always been essential to social change throughout history. Powerful structures won't give up their power or fall apart on their own — they need our help. The fact that things may seem bleak at the moment, or that a lot of people spend all day glued to a computer, doesn't change these historical dynamics. If

system is essential, but not enough. The current system is based on hierarchy, violence, competition, loneliness and technological and economic systems disconnected from the pursuit of happiness, freedom or beauty. The better we understand these dynamics, the better we can wrap our brains around how to reorganize the world on counter-goals and counter-values. An ecologically sustainable and just world needs to be based on cooperation, not competition. On diversity, community, and connection, not violence, power, isolation and loneliness. Such a world will understand that happiness and freedom aren't based on material wealth, but rather on engagement with the beauty of and love for other people and the earth.

Theoretical alternatives can be powerful and inspiring, but they're more culturally contagious when they're expressed in the real world. At least a part of the process of social transformation is millions of people collectively concluding that living in new ways is easier and more enjoyable than plodding along under the current system. We need to build demonstration projects to give some feeling of how amazing life is without capitalism and the system. These may include building worker cooperatives, communal housing, volunteer collectives and local economies, but these

know it from the media or the grim "be realistic" culture of the American Dream built on everyone mowing their own fucking lawn. The political and economic foundations of the system — privatization, competition, consumerism, efficiency — should make our counter-culture / alternative / radical community impossible, and yet we're thriving. Our friends are named Bananas and Booze.

Along with building community gardens and bike co-ops, we need to build lived experiences of solidarity, mutual aid and sharing. The system loves selfishness and hyper-individualism, and promotes a hip cynicism in which when one worker hears another worker is earning more because they're in a union, the reaction is to complain about the union, rather than your own boss for not paying you more, too. This lack of solidarity between workers and failure of workers to see themselves as a class is currently a glaring roadblock to social transformation.

Both types of struggle — resistance and building alternatives — crucially depend on millions of us *first* changing our own psychological outlook so we can pull ourselves and our friends and neighbors out of the current rut of powerlessness and resignation. The system is limping along, drifting rudderless from crisis to crisis. As such, it's fragile and



ON

By Lesley Danger Haddock

I am huddled up in blankets by the wood stove in a tipi, sipping the coffee that is brewed at all hours here as the wind howls across the fallow cornfields that surround our little camp. Outside you have to squint to see lights off in the distance, but the sky is freckled with more stars than I have ever seen before. A small handful of us are gathered here, listening to a story first told 160 years ago.

The story is about a gigantic black snake that comes to cut across the land and poison the air and water. In the story, people from the four corners of the world must unite in a struggle for survival if they are to conquer the snake.

We have come here to fight the Keystone XL pipeline, a massive tar sands pipeline that pumps crude bitumen, mined from the Athabaskan region of Alberta, Canada and shipped down to refineries in Houston, Texas, that spit toxic black clouds into the air for whole neighborhoods to choke on. Activists from the Sicangu Lakota tribe on the Rosebud reservation have set up this Spirit Camp to block construction.

The story of the black snake haunts us. All along the route of the Keystone XL pipeline people have congregated to learn direct action tactics, fight the TransCanada Corporation that is building the pipeline, and stop construction. The Keystone XL pipeline is one of many pipelines and other fossil fuel infrastructure projects that threaten our climate, our water, and our social systems.

Sitting at home in California, I saw as people climbed trees and locked themselves to equipment in order to stop the Keystone pipeline, and I was incredibly inspired by their

economically and culturally in our communities, and in long-term and short-term ways. This is about more than fighting each new pipeline, or the huge 350.org rally in September, but that may be part of it. It is about more than fighting the 1%, the corporations, the WTO and the police, but that all may be part of it. It is about much more than the same old single issue politics, boring political meetings, and alphabet soup of activist groups, although all of these things may still be part of it.

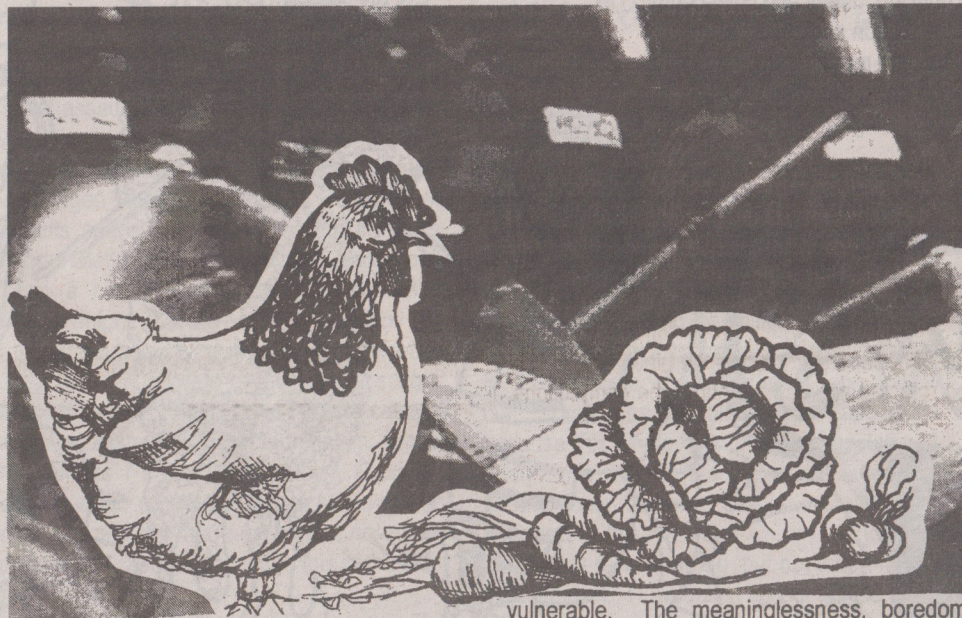
An activist who cut her teeth during Occupy recently told me that direct action and protests were passé and ineffective now because things have changed and the system has figured out ways to co-opt and divert us, but I think that's wrong. Resistance to power and injustice has always been essential to social change throughout history. Powerful structures won't give up their power or fall apart on their own — they need our help. The fact that things may seem bleak at the moment, or that a lot of people spend all day glued to a computer, doesn't change these historical dynamics. If you understand history, then you notice how economic structures, those in power and their police and prisons always seem invincible . . . right before they are wiped out. And when these structures suddenly change, it's because people got together and made it so.

It is impossible to know what issue, what tactic, what slogan or what moment might provide the spark for fundamental shifts in social organization, but when that moment comes we need to be there and ready. For each such moment, there are a hundred defeats and forgettable rallies. That means that successful prolonged resistance requires self-care and community so we don't get tired, lonely and bitter while the struggle unfolds. Resistance needs to give us more in meaning, excitement, connection, fun, music, beauty and love than it takes from us so we can endure.

A new social order requires resistance to the old order, but it also needs new ideas and examples of alternatives to the status quo, which is the the second way we can struggle for collapse of the system on our own terms.

Understanding and critiquing the current

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structures have their own frustrations, and retreating to lifestyle politics is not enough.

Our demonstration projects need to be less about structure and more about ecstatic, underground pleasure — people offering free, decentralized gifts to their neighbors. Guerrilla sculpture gardens filled with chickens and vegetables and bees. Community hot tubs under a house on a quiet street where naked bodies drift through the steam into a redwood grove. A basement full of free pinball machines open every Friday night where radical debate, laughter and pot smoking continue until the wee hours. These all exist a few blocks from me in Berkeley *right now* but you would never

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Both types of struggle — resistance and building alternatives — crucially depend on millions of us *first* changing our own psychological outlook so we can pull ourselves and our friends and neighbors out of the current rut of powerlessness and resignation. The system is limping along, drifting rudderless from crisis to crisis. As such, it's fragile and

vulnerable. The meaninglessness, boredom and social alienation of life in a self-destructing system with no goal greater than making more and more stuff faster and faster is increasingly driving people mad. This helps explain the seemingly random school shootings and the fundamentalist beheadings carried out by alienated youth from western countries.

Ultimately, only a very thin line separates the system's dull days from the world that will emerge in its ruins. The process of collapse and transition is inevitable, but passivity and resignation are not the inevitable or exclusive response. Rather, we can be part of the process if we stay engaged with others, ourselves and the world around us.

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Sitting at home in California, I saw as people climbed trees and locked themselves to equipment in order to stop the Keystone pipeline, and I was incredibly inspired by their bravery and creativity. But when the southern leg of the Keystone pipeline was successfully built I realized that more help was needed, and wanted to do whatever I could to support the work of people living in front-line communities along the northern pipeline route.

In March I packed a backpack and set out on a hitchhiking adventure that took me from the plains of South Dakota to the booming Houston metropolis. My own experiences as a white, middle-class, institutionally educated person necessarily shaped my interpretation of the world, and I have tried to stay critical of the problematic tendency of white settlers to dominate environmental movements.

Along the way I collected stories from people who were either dragged into the fight against the pipeline as TransCanada and the US government seized their backyards or threatened their livelihoods, or who came willingly, looking to share their skills. Some of the stories are heartbreaking, some are uplifting, all have something to teach us.

My journey began at the Spirit Camp in

Urban Shield - Urban Menace

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Urban Shield - Urban Menace

By G. Smith

People calling for an end to militarization of the police protested September 5 at the Marriott Hotel in Oakland against Urban Shield exercises held there September 4-8. Urban Shield is a federal program that conducts military drills with local police and Sheriffs Departments in various cities to practice how local police would combat and respond to a terrorist attack. The events showcase military hardware and are co-sponsored by private defense contractors.

The U.S. government claims the program is designed to combat terrorism in the United States but what is the real motive behind Urban Shield? The War on Terror was a made up war to give the U.S. government an excuse to wage a war on us, and to go to war in Iraq shortly after the 9/11 bombings. A war on terror is not a war in a real sense, for terror is a tactic, not

an enemy that can be fought. The U.S. Government claims that terrorism was directed by Osama bin Laden or radical Islamic jihadist groups, whose origins are in the Middle East. However, it was the U.S. which created Osama bin Laden. He was originally an ally of the U.S. in its fight to overthrow the Afghanistan

bosses / the capitalist class, is not afraid of factions in the Middle East dropping bombs on each other. The U.S. encourages such wars to keep the Middle East unstable. In reality, the U.S. government is afraid of us, the working people!

That is why the government wants drills like

Urban Shield is a preparation to quell urban unrest and uprisings by the masses. The bosses are scared of us!

government. The total cost of Operation Cyclone — the code name for CIA financing of the Afghan mujahideen during the Soviet War in Afghanistan from 1979-89 — was \$20 billion, the most expensive, undercover CIA operation in history. Our tax dollars at work!

The U.S. government, which is a tool of the

Urban Shield. It is a preparation to quell urban unrest and uprisings by the masses. Anger is certainly growing, as witnessed during the Occupy Movements that swept the country. The bosses are scared of us!

This is why our opposition is so bitter to

Urban Shield. Urban Shield is a way for the bosses — and their government in Washington — to try to intimidate us, to rule through fear. Urban Shield has donated military hardware and military vehicles to various police departments in major cities across the country. Why does a police department need a tank? It is a scare tactic on the part of the bosses and their state to instill fear into the American people.

The riots and police response in Ferguson clearly demonstrate that when the masses are mobilized and take to the streets in large numbers, the police can't stop us. All the donated military hardware ends up being used against us. The police and military use terror against the working people in this country on a daily basis.

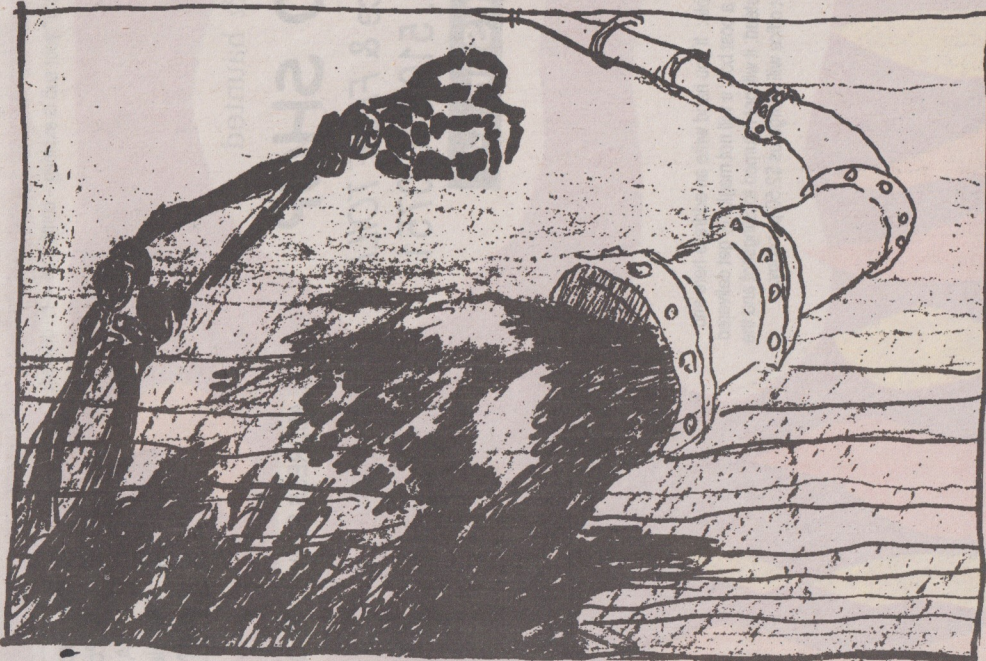
Down with Urban Shield military exercises!

THE TAR SANDS TRAIL

South Dakota, just a small circle of tipis on a slight hill in the middle of miles of fields, stretching out to the horizon. Hay bales are stacked around the camp to shield campers from the wind, and also as a buffer against gunfire, in case the camp is attacked. Each morning, campers greet the sun with prayer and each evening a sweat lodge is held to offer prayers to stop the pipeline.

On my first night at the camp, I was sitting in

fossil fuel extraction from all over the U.S. and Canada to share knowledge and skills. Over the weekend there were workshops on writing press releases, using lockboxes, climbing trees, etc. to get people ready to put their bodies in the way of the Keystone Pipeline. While the training was specifically teaching non-violent direct action, many expressed that it was one of many tactics people were prepared to use.



the kitchen tent talking to Gary Dorr, a Nez. Perce organizer, and I asked him if he had been an activist before the Keystone XL pipeline proposal. He looked at me and said "I am an Indian. An Indian is an activist every day."

It was at the Moccasins on the Ground training that I first got connected with people from Tar Sands Blockade, the Texan direct action group responsible for the well publicized tree-sit in the way of the pipeline as well as a number of other actions.

others wanted to focus on appealing to radicals. The majority hoped to create an alliance across political boundaries. While several landowners did end up on the frontlines fighting TransCanada's attempt to roll through their land, others were either uninterested, or fought the company with Tar Sands Blocade until the stakes were too high or the incentives improved. TransCanada offered money to those who were resisting, and when that didn't work, threatened to sue them. Several, including David Daniel, signed out of fear that they might lose their property, families, and businesses if they continued to fight. Those who signed contracts allowing the pipeline on their land were made to sign gag orders saying they would not speak out about the project, and refused to speak to or work with the group again.

A number of other blockades popped off in Texas, eventually leading TransCanada to sue the Tar Sands Blockade. Internal stresses and fear of the lawsuit led some organizers to split off and head north to Oklahoma, where Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance organized a series of blockades, including locking down to construction equipment. Two organizers in Oklahoma were absurdly accused of bioterrorism after unfurling an anti-tar sands banner in a public oil company building and spilling glitter on passersby.

While many of the organizers are still grappling with legal charges and what the eventual construction of the southern piece of the Keystone Pipeline means for them, they have also started pushing in other directions, some focusing on building solidarity with communities in the Houston area, where the tar sands end up to be refined. The refinery

pipelines go through Cushing, Oklahoma. It's all coming here. It's all hitting us. We're trying to step back, reflect on what we learned, start building connections, and start pushing back against a dominant culture that needs to change. It's not something immediate we can fight back against, it's not something we can go chain ourselves to. It's more complicated than that."

Back up in Nebraska, the fight against the Keystone Pipeline rages on. There, a lawsuit filed in Nebraska has stalled the permitting process, giving organizers needed time to prepare to fight the construction, and opening up the possibility that the pipeline will be flat-out rejected throughout the state. A number of projects have been created by the group BOLD Nebraska, a liberal group focused on stopping the exploitation of eminent domain, which is used by the government to usurp privately held land for projects that supposedly are for public use and which has been used to force the pipeline through unwilling landowners' backyards.

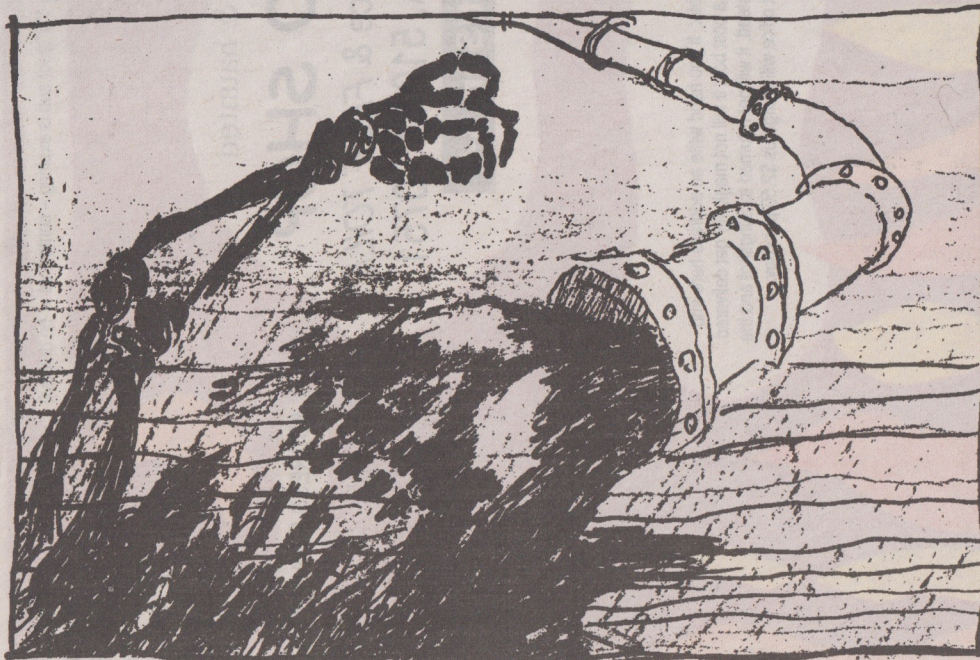
The group has planted a sacred strain of Ponca corn and built a clean-energy barn in the way of the proposed route, hoping to exacerbate legal barriers to construction. One landowner, Tom Genung, says that getting involved in the fight against the Keystone XL pipeline has changed his life, inspiring him to get arrested in Washington DC and introducing him to many people who are now his close friends.

"Who would ever have imagined that this would happen? You know? It wasn't part of my life plan," Genung says.

Back up at the Spirit Camp, the legal challenges in Nebraska have delayed

gunfire, in case the camp is attacked. Each morning, campers greet the sun with prayer and each evening a sweat lodge is held to offer prayers to stop the pipeline.

On my first night at the camp, I was sitting in



the kitchen tent talking to Gary Dorr, a Nez. Perce organizer, and I asked him if he had been an activist before the Keystone XL pipeline proposal. He looked at me and said "I am an Indian. An Indian is an activist every day."

The Keystone XL pipeline is just one more attack on a population that is always on the defensive. When I ask why people are camping here, almost everyone gives me the same answer. They are here because the water they and their children drink is imperiled by the pipeline plan. Because they have watched tribes up north in Canada disintegrate and First Nations people die of cancer from the water pollution. For the people at the Spirit Camp, water is life. As crude bitumen flows over the Missouri river and the Oglala aquifer, their existence is being threatened yet again, and on just another front.

While folks on Rosebud are praying to stop the pipeline, neighbors at the Pine Ridge reservation are training, getting ready to use a variety of tactics. Oglala leader Debra White-Plume has worked through Owe Aku (meaning "Bring Back the Way") to organize a series of

bodies in the way of the Keystone Pipeline. While the training was specifically teaching non-violent direct action, many expressed that it was one of many tactics people were prepared to use.

It was at the Moccasins on the Ground training that I first got connected with people from Tar Sands Blockade, the Texan direct action group responsible for the well publicized tree-sit in the way of the pipeline as well as a number of other actions.

Many of the organizers in South Dakota are full of hope, confident that the pipeline plan will be rejected and excited about the connections that are finally being made. In Texas, however, where the pipeline is already built and pumping tar sands, people are still healing from the trauma they experienced.

"We threw everything we had at this pipeline," one organizer confided, "and we still lost. Where do we go from there?"

The Tar Sands Blockaders spent months sleeping in rural squats, collecting climbing equipment, preparing to stop construction. They had been approached by a landowner, David Daniel, who had been coerced into signing a contract with TransCanada, and who wanted to fight the company off. The tree-sit they organized lasted for three months, until TransCanada routed the pipeline around the protestors.

uninterested, or fought the company with Tar Sands Blockade until the stakes were too high or the incentives improved. TransCanada offered money to those who were resisting, and when that didn't work, threatened to sue them. Several, including David Daniel, signed out of fear that they might lose their property, families, and businesses if they continued to fight. Those who signed contracts allowing the pipeline on their land were made to sign gag orders saying they would not speak out about the project, and refused to speak to or work with the group again.

A number of other blockades popped off in Texas, eventually leading TransCanada to sue the Tar Sands Blockade. Internal stresses and fear of the lawsuit led some organizers to split off and head north to Oklahoma, where Great Plains Tar Sands Resistance organized a series of blockades, including locking down to construction equipment. Two organizers in Oklahoma were absurdly accused of bioterrorism after unfurling an anti-tar sands banner in a public oil company building and spilling glitter on passersby.

While many of the organizers are still grappling with legal charges and what the eventual construction of the southern piece of the Keystone Pipeline means for them, they have also started pushing in other directions, some focusing on building solidarity with communities in the Houston area, where the tar sands end up to be refined. The refinery area in Houston is a veritable hellscape that stretches for miles, pushed right up against

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Back up in Nebraska, the fight against the Keystone Pipeline rages on. There, a lawsuit filed in Nebraska has stalled the permitting process, giving organizers needed time to prepare to fight the construction, and opening up the possibility that the pipeline will be flat-out rejected throughout the state. A number of projects have been created by the group BOLD Nebraska, a liberal group focused on stopping the exploitation of eminent domain, which is used by the government to usurp privately held land for projects that supposedly are for public use and which has been used to force the pipeline through unwilling landowners' backyards.

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Back up at the Spirit Camp, the legal challenges in Nebraska have delayed construction in South Dakota so that the permits have expired. In order to construct the

We can't just attack all the pipelines. We're pushing back against a dominant culture that needs to change. It's not something we can go chain ourselves to. It's more complicated than that.

low-income neighborhoods, primarily occupied by people of color. The air is thick with the black waste that spews from the giant processing plants, and associated health problems are rampant.

In Oklahoma, Bailey, one of the "glitter

pipeline TransCanada will have to go through the long permitting process all over again. When I began my journey we huddled to keep warm as snow piled outside. I returned to the camp as the hot South Dakota sun beat down and flies swarmed. Still the camp goes on, with

defensive. When I ask why people are camping here, almost everyone gives me the same answer. They are here because the water they and their children drink is imperiled by the pipeline plan. Because they have watched tribes up north in Canada disintegrate and First Nations people die of cancer from the water pollution. For the people at the Spirit Camp, water is life. As crude bitumen flows over the Missouri river and the Oglala aquifer, their existence is being threatened yet again, and on just another front.

While folks on Rosebud are praying to stop the pipeline, neighbors at the Pine Ridge reservation are training, getting ready to use a variety of tactics. Oglala leader Debra White-Plume has worked through Owe Aku (meaning "Bring Back the Way") to organize a series of non-violent direct action trainings called Moccasins on the Ground.

I left the Spirit Camp to join in this year's training, which brought organizers fighting

be rejected and excited about the connections that are finally being made. In Texas, however, where the pipeline is already built and pumping tar sands, people are still healing from the trauma they experienced.

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Some members of Tar Sands Blockade had decided early on that appealing to conservative Texas landowners was the best way to gain traction with the public, while

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low-income neighborhoods, primarily occupied by people of color. The air is thick with the black waste that spews from the giant processing plants, and associated health problems are rampant.

In Oklahoma, Bailey, one of the "glitter terrorists" tells me that while there is a lot of disappointment there's also a lot of energy and excitement for what comes next.

"We can't just attack all the pipelines. ALL

pipeline TransCanada will have to go through the long permitting process all over again. When I began my journey we huddled to keep warm as snow piled outside. I returned to the camp as the hot South Dakota sun beat down and flies swarmed. Still the camp goes on, with prayers offered every day.

For more stories from activists along the pipeline route, pick up a copy of the zine Fueling Dissent, or visit fuelingdissent.org



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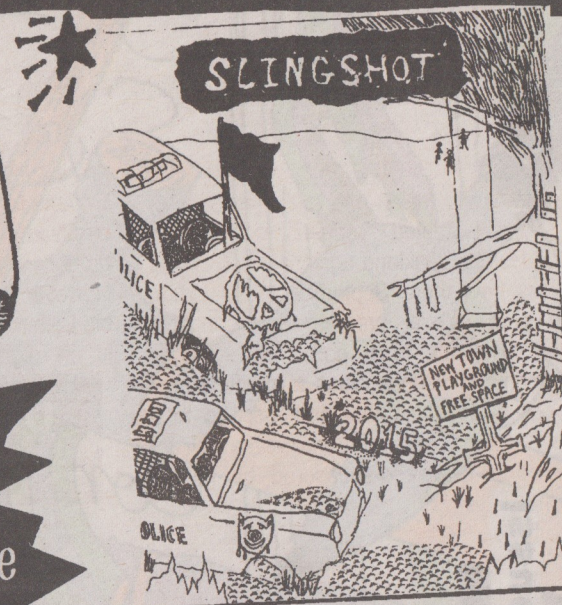
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RADICAL AGENDA

November 28

Buy Nothing Day - trade, dumpster, play.
Everywhere. adbusters.org/campaigns/bnd

December 6 • 10-5

East Bay Alternative Book & Zine Fest -
Speakers V.Vale & Janelle Hessig.
Workshops, numerous tables. Berkeley
City College, 2050 Center St.
eastbayalternativebookandzinefest.com

December 7 • 10-6 pm

East Bay Anarchist Book Fair - Dozens of
publishers and tables. Emphasis on
conversations and discussion. Art @
Humanist Hall 390 27th St. Oakland
eastbayanarchist.com

December 10

5th Anniversary of the Arab Spring. RIOT!!!
Spokescouncil. Picnic. Everywhere /
organize your own event.

December 13 • 10-6 pm

7th Humboldt Anarchist Book Fair - Food
Not Bombs, child care, readings, Kristian
Willaims, puppet show, @ Manila
Community Center 1611 Peninsula Dr.
Manila.humboldtgrassroots.com

January 9 • 8 pm

East Bay Bike Party - starting BART
stations tba: eastbaybikeparty.wordpress

January 25 • 4 pm

Slingshot new volunteer meeting / article
brainstorm for issue #118

January 29 • 6 pm

San Francisco Critical Mass bike ride.
Gather at Justin Herman Plaza

February 14 • 3 pm

Article deadline for Slingshot issue #118 -
3124 Shattuck Berkeley

February 17 • Sunrise 'til you pass out

Berkeley Mardi Gras - Neo pagan
surrealist reappropriation of X-tian holiday
—oh yeah & lots of booze and weed! You
can find the parade @ People's Park noon

March 8

International Women's Day

April 1 • Noon

St. Stupid Day Parade Roving party of
pranks and radical history. Downtown SF

April • 25 10-6 pm

20th Bay Area Anarchist Book Fair. Books
& info tables, skillshares, speakers, films
@ Crucible 1260 7th St. Oakland
bayareaanarchistbookfair.wordpress.com

April 15

Steal Something From Work Day - STOP
BEING A VICTIM OF CAPITALISM
steafromwork.crimethinc.com

Sometime in Spring

All Power to the Imagination Conference
brings together community organizers and
academics New College of Florida
Sarasota allpowertotheimagination.com

May 13 noon -9 pm

Protest the 30 year anniversary of the
police bombing of the MOVE house in
Philadelphia. Rally at 62nd & Osage Ave
and march to First District Plaza 3801
Market St., Philadelphia. Onamove.com

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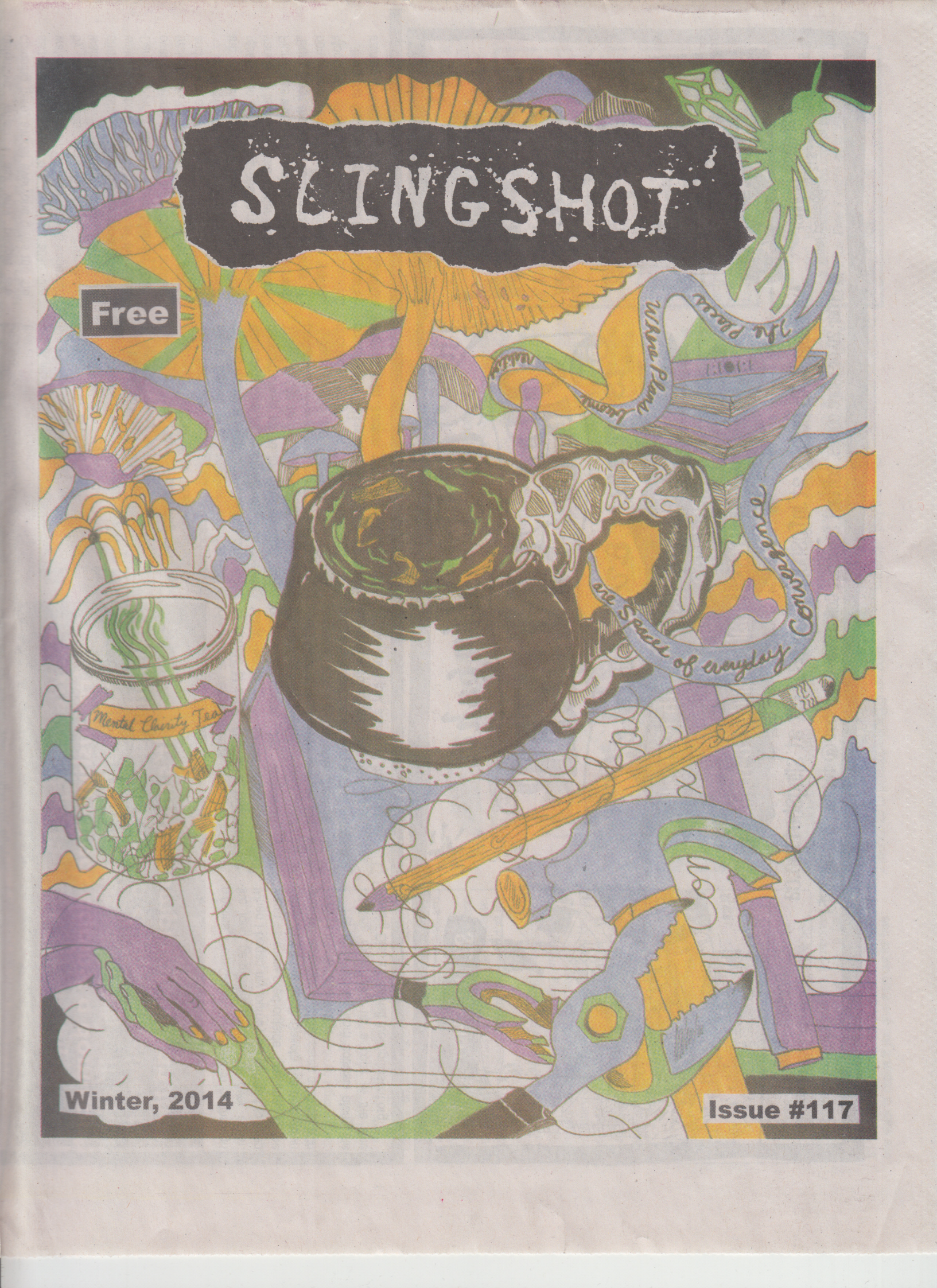
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Winter, 2014

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